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# The debate on limited war, 1957-1959 :: a study of attitudes.

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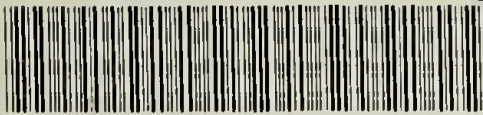
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THE DEBATE ON LIMITED WAR

1957-1959

A STUDY OF ATTITUDES

NORMAN ALAN BREINES

1961



The Debate on Limited War, 1957 - 1959  
A Study of Attitudes

by

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Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### Part I: Background

Introduction..... 1

#### Chapter I

The United States and Limited War..... 8

### Part II: The Debate on Limited War, 1957-1959

#### Chapter II

The Armed Services..... 19

#### Chapter III

The Administration..... 43

#### Chapter IV

Congress..... 53

#### Chapter V

Congress, the Administration, and the Budget..... 70

### Part III: Conclusion

#### Chapter VI

Conclusion..... 90

Bibliography..... 100

JUN 1 1961  
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## Introduction

Of course anything is possible in this world in which we live...but I say this: the likelihood that any nation possessing these great weapons of massive destruction would use them in an attack, grows less, I think, every year. I believe that as their understanding of them grows, then the less the chance that they would go on an adventure that brought these things into play, because as I see it, any such operation is just another way of committing suicide.

.....Dwight Eisenhower <sup>1</sup>

What President Eisenhower was describing in a press conference in February of 1957 was a phenomenon which has come to be called the nuclear stalemate, a condition brought about by the existence of parity in weapons of mass destruction in the hands of the United States and the Soviet Union, preventing them from "launching all-out war because each can force the other to pay an exorbitant price for victory."<sup>2</sup> The beginning of this "stalemate" occurred during the Truman administration in 1949, for in that year the Soviets exploded their first atomic bomb, signifying the end of the American nuclear monopoly. Within a few years, the Soviet Union possessed a retaliatory capability which equalled, if it did not surpass, that of the United States. As a result, a stalemate had arisen in which neither state was willing to risk the destruction a nuclear war would bring. Added to this was the fact that neither side recognized a compelling causus belli, and thus recourse to major war was lessened

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<sup>1</sup>President Eisenhower, press conference, quoted in New York Times, February 7, 1957, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Kissinger, Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1957), p. 110.

However, because the Soviets retained the idea of the inevitable triumph of Communism over capitalism, it was very unlikely that they would abandon their expansionistic aims. The more likely course for the Communists to take in their quest for world domination would be mainly through non-military (economic, political, social) means and by military aggression short of total war, "confining their aggression to places and circumstances in which war would not jeopardize objectives of sufficient immediate importance to warrant all-out retaliation..."<sup>3</sup> The phrase "non-military means military aggression short of total war" may refer to indirect methods of diplomacy, economic pressures, propaganda, subversion, infiltration, insurrection, obstruction, planned mischief, underground war, sabotage, intimidation, armed threats, limited war, and war by proxy.<sup>4</sup> It may even be indirect aggression where the USSR does not even appear as a contestant, but supplies one side with materiel and technical advice.

Although the ultimate objectives of Soviet policy are inflexible, the tactics by which they may be achieved are very flexible and are governed by a kind of opportunism -- one step backward in order to take two forward. The communists have shown this ability to retreat as well as advance many times in recent history. They did it in Spain before World War II, they were defeated in Greece in 1947, and they backed down in Berlin in 1948. In the words of one analyst, "they have tried to control the use of force because in most cases they have seen a specific

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<sup>3</sup>Robert Osgood, Limited War, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1957), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Brigadier C. V. Barclay, as quoted in Theodore Ropp, War in the Modern World, (Durham: Duke, 1959), pp. 380-81.



advantage in the exercise of restraint."<sup>5</sup>

Yet, the fact remains that the forces of Communism are at war with the Free World, through subversion, espionage and small scale war and will remain so until their goals are achieved or they are defeated. What this discussion is implying is that because of the existence of the "nuclear stalemate" the Communist forces may not resort to total war to achieve their aims, but instead will use limited forms of aggression in their struggle.

Karl von Clausewitz in his treatise On War had indicated that war need not always be total, but may at times appear in a limited form. First, limited war would occur whenever the political tensions or the political aims involved were small. In his words,

A war need not...always be fought until one of the parties is overthrown, and we may suppose that when the motives and tensions are weak, a slight, scarcely perceptible probability is in itself enough to move that side to which it is unfavorable to give way. Now, were the other side convinced of this beforehand, he would, naturally, strive for this probability only, instead of first going out of his way to attempt to effect a complete overthrow of the enemy.<sup>6</sup>

It would appear that this condition has not been fulfilled during the present period since political tensions are not "small" and the Communist political aims involve the complete victory of communism over capitalism, with the struggle ending only when this aim is realized.

However, Clausewitz's second condition for limited war may very well be applicable to the situation facing the world today. According

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<sup>5</sup>William Kaufmann, "Limited War", in William Kaufmann, editor, Military Policy and National Security, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), p. 103.

<sup>6</sup>Karl von Clausewitz, On War, translated by O. J. Matthijs Jolles, (Washington: Combat Forces Press, 1953), p.21 (Bk. I, Ch. II).



to Clausewitz "we see...that in wars in which the one side cannot completely disarm the other, the motives to peace will rise and fall on both sides according to the probability of future success and the expenditure of force required."<sup>7</sup> This statement implies that war will be limited when the overthrow of the enemy cannot be conceived of or can be approached only in an indirect way. Although this statement was premised on the insufficiency of the military means, it can also be valid when the means may be sufficient to overthrow the enemy, but would produce universal disaster. "A victory robbed of its meaning is no victory at all."<sup>8</sup> What cannot be conceived of is the complete protection of one's country, and as long as this condition exists, the possibility of total war (premeditated) is minimized.

The purpose of this paper will be to determine what effect the above conclusions have had on American military strategists and political leaders. It will mainly be a study of attitudes and the reasons behind them. The proposition set forth is that in the present period limited war is more likely to occur than total war due to the "nuclear stalemate" and the inability of either of the two opposing forces to completely insure its own protection so that it could successfully win a total war. This implies that the United States, while maintaining an adequate atomic retaliatory force to insure protection against total war, must also be adequately prepared to fight limited wars should they occur.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> "Limited War: the prospects and possibilities," Army Information Digest, Vol. XIII, June, 1958, p. 12. This idea may also be found in H. Rothfels, "Clausewitz," in Edward Meade Earl, Makers of Modern Strategy, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1944,) p. 109.



This proposition has become the subject of a heated debate within military and political circles and involves much more than purely strategic considerations. As will be shown, it involves the desire of the Armed Services to maintain their prestige and even build up their own "empires." The Air Force has a vested interest in securing funds for total war preparation and maintaining its budget. The Army and Navy desire to have both a limited war and a total war capability. This means a greater budget and more power for each. The aircraft industry and part of the missile industry have a vested interest in a policy for total war because of the defense contracts they receive. The same holds true for the small arms and tactical missile industries which have a vested interest in a policy designed to combat limited war. Some companies may provide for both a total war and a limited war policy and thus have an interest in seeing that both policies are followed. Politically the Democratic Congress uses defense policy as a partisan weapon to attack the policies of the Republican administration. The Democrats may argue that not enough has been done to combat limited wars, and thus the policies of the administration are inadequate. This also involves a fight between Congress and the administration in determining what constitutes an adequate defense posture. At the same time the administration recognizes the need for defense against both types of war and contends it is being maintained.

In 1957 there began a rash of books and articles dealing with this subject led by Henry Kissinger's Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy and Robert Osgeed's Limited War. These books have been followed by Lt. General (ret.) James Gavin's War and Peace in the Space Age (1958),



Oskar Morgenstern's The Question of National Defense (1959), and General (ret.) Maxwell Taylor's The Uncertain Trumpet (1960). These books have elicited a considerable response from public opinion and seem to be the major American sources on limited warfare to this date. Because these authors tend toward generalities and make many value judgments, the books do not present a true picture of the debate over limited war. Furthermore, they present only one side of the debate--the limited war side. Thus, in order to show a clearer picture of the attitudes of the nation's policy-makers on the subject of limited war, the Congressional Record, Service journals, popular periodicals, and the New York Times will also be used.

This paper covers the period 1957 to the Eisenhower budget message for Fiscal Year 1961. The 1957 date was chosen because it marks an upsurge in the debate over defense policy centering around the necessity of preparing to deter or to fight limited wars. The 1960 date was chosen as the other limit to the thesis because it marks the last major effort by the present administration on the matter of defense. Consequently, a brief history of the American attitude toward limited war up to 1957 will be dealt with as a background to the study.

As previously mentioned, this will be primarily a study of attitudes and the often contradictory reasons behind them. At the same time the difference between words and deeds must be noted, for often public pronouncement is for public consumption only and is made for expediency's sake. An example of this is the difference between the testimony of the Joint Chiefs of Staff before the Appropriations Committees of Congress and their statements made in service journals - their own



"unofficial" views. There also may be differences between the attitude of the administration toward the need to provide for limited war forces and the actual policy. This will be analyzed by showing first the attitude of the administration and then by studying the defense budgets for the fiscal years 1959, 1960, and 1961. The same will be done with Congress. Because the inclusion of expenditures for space programs tends to complicate the debate, and since the space program has been taken out of the hands of the military and is still in the early stages of development (as far as immediate strategic use is concerned), its relation to limited war capabilities and government policy will not be dealt with thoroughly.

In concluding the thesis an attempt will be made to clarify the position of American thinking and policy on the concept of limited war in order to determine what effects, if any, the doctrine has had on actual policy, to ascertain why the administration has or has not adopted limited war capabilities, and to decide what future action, if any, the Government must take in order to remedy the situation. In this respect, it is hoped that this paper may have some original value.

## Chapter I

## The United States and Limited War

In the United States down to the earlier years of the 20th century there had always been an intimate relation between war and domestic politics. In fact, every war the United States had fought in the Western Hemisphere was a limited war. James Knox Polk in the mid-1840's "could manipulate his war powers quite skillfully as a means of securing both political and national objectives which seemed important to him."<sup>1</sup> For Lincoln the Civil War was as much a political as it was a military operation. He used military violence only to secure definite political results. In the Spanish-American War, McKinley was able to use war as an instrument of politics and policy. However, by Wilson's time "war was....so terrible and desperate a recourse that it could no longer be used....to achieve limited national aims or make good narrow aims of foreign policy...It could only be taken up for the grandest of total objectives,"<sup>2</sup> such as "making the world safe for democracy" -- specifically, American democracy. This can be said to have been a political aim, but not in the same sense used by Polk or McKinley who used war to gain specific national aims. The grand objectives desired by Wilson were neither specific nor limited and thus are not comparable to the aims sought by Polk or McKinley. Moreover, Wilson was forced to use policy as an instrument of war, while Polk and McKinley used war as an instrument of policy. They had a definite policy in mind and willingly used war to gain their ends. Wilson was forced to go to war to achieve his desired goals and thus his policy became an instrument of the war itself.

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<sup>1</sup>Walter Millis, Arms and Men, (New York: New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1956), p. 322.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.



The American people began to view war as a thing in itself rather than as the continuation of policy and diplomacy. It became something to abolish, or if fought, a means of punishing an enemy who had disturbed the peace. To American thinking war and peace became two diametrically opposed states and each was suspended during the period of the other.<sup>3</sup> Much of this attitude was fostered by President Wilson himself in World War I. Before 1917 he tried to get a permanent peace settlement and sent his personal advisor, Colonel Edward House, on peace missions to Europe in 1915 and 1916, but nothing came of the negotiations. Again, after his election in 1916, Wilson drafted a note appealing to the belligerents to state the reasons for which they were fighting the war. Germany replied, but the Allies were unwilling to state their own war aims. Then on January 22, 1917, Wilson gave his famous speech to the Senate calling for the establishment of a League of Nations to bring about world accord and warning the belligerents that only "peace without victory" would bring a permanent settlement. The speech furthered Wilson's leadership in the world, but had no effect on the belligerents, especially the Allies, who could not afford a stalemate.<sup>4</sup> This final rebuke together with Germany's resumption of its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare forced Wilson to yield to the sword. He then turned to the other extreme and attempted to get the war over as fast as possible used the maximum of force on the grounds that total victory was necessary to make the world safe for democracy. It was an attitude which, once the war was won, caused the American public to withdraw

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<sup>3</sup>Osgood, op.cit., p. 29.

<sup>4</sup>Thomas Bailey, A Diplomatic History of the American People, (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc.) 1950, pp. 635-36 and 640-41.



from the international scene on the grounds that since victory was complete, there would be no more war. Military thinking became entirely defensive, and prior to World War II American thinking was completely in accord with the idea that the United States could remain out of war by having an impregnable defense.

It was World War II which showed that the United States could not keep herself isolated from world events, and it showed that American security could be endangered by upheavals overseas. The crusading character of World War II instilled the idea of total victory into American strategic thinking along with approval of waging all-out nuclear war. After all, to American thinking the United States possessed the greatest military machine in the world at the end of the war, and the atomic bombs dropped on Japan were the perfect reminder that the United States had at last the ultimate weapon. War was no longer viewed as an instrument of policy by the American people; it was an end in itself.

It has been claimed that American military thinking was actually paralyzed by the atomic bomb, and that the lessons to be gained from World War II<sup>5</sup> were quickly forgotten by the Truman administration. The successes of the A-bombs in Japan seemed to validate the old Douhet theory of strategic bombing -- the actual success of which in World War II was dubious.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>James Gavin, War and Peace in the Space Age, (New York: Harper, 1958), pp. 92-112. Among those lessons cited by Gavin were the use of tactical air support and troop transport, airborne operations, amphibious operations, carrier task force operations, and air mobility.

<sup>6</sup>Because the Japanese conveyed peace overtures to the Russians in April of 1945, there is strong evidence that the war could have been won without resort to the atomic bomb, and that it was really the destruction of the Japanese merchant fleet that defeated Japan. See Harold Vinacke's A History of the Far East in Modern Times, (New York; Appleton-Century-Croftes, Inc., 1950), pp. 652-56.



This theory saw air power as strategic -- "a means of striking at the enemy homeland, where the targets would be the civilian population and productive plant, the very sources of military power."<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, "the nation that developed the greatest air offensive power would win (the next war), very likely in a matter of hours."<sup>8</sup>

Thus the United States began to prepare for future wars by building up a strong nuclear striking force. In truth, this was a very feasible and logical policy, for the Soviet Union was beginning to consolidate its gains in Europe and was looked upon as the prime threat to American security. The Truman administration felt that it was not paralyzed by the atomic bomb but was acting to deter further conquest by the forces of Communism in the form of a surprise attack. Furthermore, through such means as the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine, actual uses of limited techniques to combat Communism, the administration was trying to make Europe strong enough to resist the Soviet advances. The specific military doctrine was actually incorporated into a foreign policy of containing Communist expansion (although the administration did not explicitly admit it). The object of the policy was to

....keep the Soviet sphere of control from expanding beyond its postwar boundaries by building up local situations of strength and by demonstrating a capacity to meet force with counterforce.<sup>9</sup>

One of the means of accomplishing this objective was the deterrence of Communist aggression by America's capacity to retaliate against

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<sup>7</sup>Roger Hilsman, "Strategic Doctrines for Limited War," in William Kaufmann, op. cit., p. 45.

<sup>8</sup>Gavin, op. cit., p. 96.

<sup>9</sup>Osgood, op. cit., p. 142. This was the original idea behind the policy of containment devised by George F. Kennan.



aggression by means of total war.<sup>10</sup> Even though this was only one of the ways in which containment was to work, it tended to become the principal characteristic of American military policy prior to the Korean War, although the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine were examples of the use of limited non-military techniques.

There are several reasons for the success of the idea of relying primarily upon air power. The most frequently cited reason was the threat of Soviet expansion, but there were other, more important, reasons which were not as apparent as the Soviet threat. Probably, the most important of these reasons was the new-found power of the United States Air Force, which had gained great prestige with the advent of the atomic bomb and even had become a separate service in 1947. Air Force high brass were now interested in placing the Air Force on at least an equal footing with the other services. The success of the bombs on Japan helped the Air Force expand and started the groundwork for its later rise to a position dominating the other services. The aircraft industry probably played an important part in this rise in an effort to secure greater profits than it would have if a more flexible policy were followed. Such a policy offered smaller sacrifices for the average citizen, and thus he felt that a large Air Force with fewer personnel and huge weapons and preferable to a large standing Army and Navy. Thus, by 1953 the Air Force had a personnel strength of 977,000 and a budget of over \$20 billion.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 150. The other means to contain Communist advances were meeting force with counterforce in a local and limited action, and building situations of strength overseas through economic, technical, and military aid.

<sup>11</sup>Encyclopedia Americana, (Washington: Americana Corp.), Vol. 1, p.288.



Even as early as 1950, the Air Force had only 182,000 less men than did the Army.<sup>12</sup>

This policy was criticized by Secretary of State George Marshall, who saw that the United States was increasing its commitments overseas without providing for adequate forces to back them up, except for the atomic retaliatory forces. According to him, "We are playing with fire while we have nothing with which to put it out."<sup>13</sup> Even he was not without blame, however, as he played a key role in letting the China "fire" get out of hand, as his negotiating mission failed. Then in 1949 the explosion of the Russian atomic bomb led the United States to build larger retaliatory weapons in order to stay ahead of the Russians. Thus, by 1950 the doctrines of total war and large scale nuclear retaliation tended to be the major guiding forces in American strategic thinking.

It was the Korean War which forced the administration to take notice of the possibilities of limited aggressions occurring under the umbrella of nuclear deterrents. The war was a shock to the planners because it defied all previous American strategic thinking. The attack did not come upon the United States, nor was it initiated by the Soviet Union (directly). Korea was not even included in the American defense perimeter. "Years of propaganda had pretty well convinced Americans by 1950 that air power was the primary, if not almost the only, expression of modern military power."<sup>14</sup> There was no doubt that the North Korean

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<sup>12</sup>Congressional Record, Vol. 105, pt. 13, p. 16788.

<sup>13</sup>George Marshall as quoted in Millis, op. cit., p. 282. A more comprehensive statement of Marshall's position may be found in James Forrestal, The Forrestal Diaries, (New York: Viking, 1951).

<sup>14</sup>Gavin, op. cit., p. 297.



invasion had caught the American Army completely by surprise in spite of intelligence reports concerning the threat of war, for the amount of troops and equipment in Korea had greatly declined since the end of World War II.

In spite of the fact that American strategic thinking was geared to fight total, all-out wars, the administration did resort to limited war, since the issues at stake were not viewed as being great enough to justify total war. The administration felt, contrary to the wishes of General MacArthur, that the war should not spread beyond the boundaries of Korea itself, and thus the idea that it was feasible to fight limited war began to take hold in administration circles.

With this in mind a study known as "Project Vista"<sup>15</sup> was undertaken under government sponsorship to conduct a broad study of ground and tactical warfare in order to improve the country's capacity to fight limited wars. The results of the study, formulated by Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, were a desire to bring the battle back to the battlefield, as it was felt that the more dangerous problem facing the United States was not general war but limited war. Thus the recommendations of the study sought to improve the limited war capabilities of each of the services.<sup>16</sup> There has been no official mention of the results of the study, but it is significant that the administration thought enough of the implications of the Korean War to initiate such a study.

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<sup>15</sup>Project Vista was undertaken at the California Institute of Technology in 1951 under the auspices of the Army, Navy, and Air Force to conduct a broad study of ground and tactical warfare. It was chaired by Dr. Lloyd Dubridge and consisted of Drs. William Fowler, Robert Bacher, C. C. Furness, Charles Lauristen, Clark Millikan, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and H. P. Robertson.

<sup>16</sup>Gavin op. cit., pp. 131-35.



The Korean War showed the defense planners that the Communists could and would resort to measures less than total war to achieve limited ends, and the United States showed that it was capable of meeting such aggression on limited terms without expending its total productive resources. Yet, after the Korean War the administration indicated that the prime threat to American security was still that of a surprise attack by the Soviet Union, and policy was geared to meet this threat. Furthermore, in 1954 when Secretary of State Dulles indicated that massive retaliation would be the prime factor in American defense policy, he ignored the need for a strategy of flexibility to meet the Communist threat. In a speech on January 12, 1954, he declared:

So long as our basic policy concepts were unclear, our military leaders could not be selective in building our military power. If an enemy could pick his time and place and method of war fare--and if our policy was to remain the traditional one of meeting aggression by direct and local opposition--then we needed to be ready to fight in the Arctic, and in the Tropics; in Asia, the Near East, and in Europe; by the sea, by land, and in the air; with old weapons and with new weapons....

But before military planning could be changed, the President and his advisers, as represented by the National Security Council, had to take some basic policy decisions. This has been done. The basic decision was to depend primarily upon a great capacity to retaliate, instantly, by means and at places of our own choosing. Now the Department of Defense and the Joint Chiefs of Staff can shape our military establishment to fit what is our policy, instead of having to try to be ready to meet the enemy's choices.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> John Foster Dulles, quoted in New York Times, January 13, 1954, p. 2.



Out of this statement grew the doctrine of massive retaliation and the military policy known as the "New Look." The aim of this policy was to place a greater emphasis on the use of atomic retaliatory power and reduce conventional forces. According to Secretary of Defense Charles Wilson in March of 1954:

...the integration of new weapons into military planning creates new relationships between man and material which emphasizes air power and permit overall economies in the use of manpower.

The fiscal year 1955 budget incorporates the new air force objective and continues a rapid buildup of air strength, and the creation, maintenance, and full exploitation of modern air power...

As we increase the striking power of our combat forces by the application of technological advances and new weapons and by the continuing growth of air power, the total number of military personnel can be reduced.<sup>18</sup>

This was a policy primarily dependent upon massive retaliation capabilities at the expense of forces to meet local aggression. It also followed the policy of Secretary of State Dulles, a policy which ignored flexibility to meet all threats. This policy also implied that future wars would be fought in the air and there would be no more land wars such as Korea and Indochina. Furthermore, the attitude of Wilson was that by building up forces for deterring all-out war, the capability to fight limited war would also be created.

However, Admiral Radford, a staunch believer in massive retaliation, had stated earlier that the United States still had to be prepared to fight "lesser military actions short of all-out war," and President Eisenhower assured planners that local wars could be waged on the

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<sup>18</sup> Charles Wilson, quoted in New York Times, March 16, 1954, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Admiral Charles Radford, New York Times, December 13, 1953, IV, p. 5.



"fringe or periphery of our interests."<sup>20</sup> Thus, although the first priority was placed upon retaliatory forces, limited wars were postulated as a definite strategic possibility. Then the National Security Council presented a report in 1955 in which "recognition was given for the first time to the possibility of a doctrine of mutual deterrence and the importance in such a period for the United States to have versatile, ready forces to cope with limited aggression."<sup>21</sup>

In 1956 General Taylor as Army Chief of Staff proposed the adoption of a new military program by which the United States could maintain the capacity to fight limited wars and at the same time maintain an effective and credible deterrent to all-out war. The program called for forces specially equipped to meet either contingency, an adequate atomic deterrent, foreign military and economic aid to countries to build up their indigenous forces, and the application of graduated force. According to General Taylor this program would be suitable for flexible application to unforeseen situations and thus could not be geared to any one single weapons system, strategic concept, or combination of allies.<sup>22</sup> What this amounted to was a policy of containing the Communist threat by being ready to oppose aggression "with a variety of means under a variety of circumstances".<sup>23</sup> This included a capacity to fight limited war as well as general war. It also meant a capacity

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<sup>21</sup>Maxwell Taylor, The Uncertain Trumpet, (New York: Harper, 1959), pp. 22-27.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., pp. 31-37

<sup>23</sup>Osgood, op. cit., p. 235.



to deter the enemy from starting limited wars, or to win them quickly in order to prevent a "piecemeal attrition or involvement in an expanding conflict which may grow into the general war we want to avoid."<sup>24</sup>

This policy closely paralleled statements made by President Eisenhower and members of his administration since 1955. Yet it was used by General Taylor as a criticism directed toward administration policies. Certain factors enter into this apparent discrepancy. One is that there may be a difference between public statements made by administration officials and their true feelings and actual policy decisions. On the other hand, criticism of the Administration's policy from service chiefs could result from the desire to protect their own "empires" and the prestige of their services. There is also the possibility that the criticisms were guided by pure strategic considerations. What is more than likely is that this discrepancy is a result of all three factors.

Thus, from the end of World War II through 1956 American military strategy was formed under the thumb of air power and in the belief that a policy of massive retaliation was sufficient to deter any aggressor from waging all-out war on the United States. It was felt that such a policy would also prevent the outbreak of any local or limited war. Such a policy was satisfactory to the Air Force, since it relied primarily upon air power, and it was favored by the administration, since it offered a chance to economize in the defense budget. This was true of the Truman administration up to the Korean War as well as the Eisenhower administration from 1953 to 1957. Criticism came mainly from the Army and Navy, which felt that they were being slighted, and from Democratic Congressmen and Senators in their attacks on the Republican administration from 1953 to 1957.

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<sup>24</sup> Taylor, loc. cit.



## Chapter II

The Debate on Limited War  
The Armed Services

## 1

The period 1957 to the present has been marked by the continuance of a heated debate in the Pentagon, the administration, and Congress over the status of American military strategy. In this age of mutual nuclear stalemate the fear of nuclear devastation tends to impose a degree of caution upon the protagonists, forcing them to weigh carefully the risks involved in starting a nuclear holocaust. For this reason the capability of massive retaliation is essential to any defense or security policy. Such a capability includes long range bombers and ballistic missiles, military bases at home and overseas, mobile naval task forces, tactical aircraft and troops, and a multiplicity of weapons. Essentially, it is a doctrine of defense power -- the ability to strike back at the enemy with such destructive force that he will be deterred from launching an attack. This is essentially the military policy followed by the United States at this time.

Yet it can be added that the ability to deter the Soviets from starting a general war by having a defensive force of long-range nuclear firepower is not enough to deter them from starting small limited wars. What is needed are forces capable of meeting all kinds of threats. "We must be able to deliver a big punch or a gentle tap."<sup>1</sup> Such a capacity is needed because the enemy may resort to small, limited wars to gain his ends. This type of conflict does not involve the use of the nuclear

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<sup>1</sup> Hanson Baldwin, New York Times, August 18, 1957, p. 58.

retaliatory force because the objectives sought at the time are not great enough to justify the unleashing of these forces. The chief point made by the supporters of this view, namely the Army, Navy, and the Democratic members of Congress, is that we have been increasing our power to deter the Communists from starting a general war by building up our nuclear retaliatory capacity at the expense of our conventional capability, while the Soviets have been increasing their nuclear capacity without weakening their conventional capability.

This has been the view held by the officials of the U. S. Army and, recently, the Navy. In January of 1958 Secretary of the Army Wilber Brucker testified before the House Armed Services Committee that in his mind there was no doubt that the Soviet Union was planning a series of "nibbling" wars, since they were maintaining an army of 2.5 million men. "What they are going to do," he testified, "is keep nibbling away, as they have in the Mid-East, foment trouble in Indonesia and Syria and these other places around the world, and one by one drag them under the Iron Curtain by hook or crook...Unless we have a force ready to drop or get in there and do something about it, that is the best way to start one of those global things."<sup>2</sup> This same opinion was also expressed by General Maxwell Taylor when he was Army Chief of Staff. He declared that "our (the Army's) major concern, of course, is to prevent war. But if the Communists are not convinced that we will fight if necessary, our deterrent becomes invalid. If we demonstrate our readiness to use effective force to put down local aggression, it will give credulity to our general war deterrent posture. Thus, while we should never

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<sup>2</sup> Wilber Brucker, quoted in New York Times, January 25, 1958, p. 2.



seek limited wars, we must bear in mind the broad significance of our reactions to limited aggression in terms of communicating our will and determination to the potential foe."<sup>3</sup>

At no time have Army officials denied the need for a nuclear retaliatory capacity.<sup>4</sup> They believe that we now have an "overkill" capacity (the ability to destroy Russian cities many times over) in the use of nuclear retaliatory weapons. As long as we can destroy a city with one bomb or missile, it is not necessary to have five or six to do the same job, they reason. What is needed is to divert funds from the massive retaliation field to strengthen the capability to fight non-nuclear war or to create small tactical size (short range, "clean") nuclear weapons that would have only local and limited effects and would not incur the danger of spreading the war.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, General Taylor has pointed out that these wars need not be short nor small. According to him, "by striking a statistical manpower balance of all 17 limited wars (since 1945; see chart on page 25a) one finds that they have averaged about 2½ years in duration and nearly 600,000 men engaged. Often significant military effort has been required to bring these limited wars to an end."<sup>6</sup>

Following this line of thinking Major General John Daley, the Army's director of special weapons, has suggested that the "suicide" aspects of

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<sup>3</sup> Maxwell Taylor, "On limited war," Army Information Digest Vol. XIII, June, 1958, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Secretary Brucker testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee in January, 1958, "While all of us recognize the primacy of nuclear retaliation as the major deterrent to general war, we must not, in our zeal to provide this capability, neglect to meet the force requirements for limited war." New York Times, January 23, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Hanson Baldwin, New York Times, May 25, 1958, p. 28

<sup>6</sup> Maxwell Taylor, "Improving our capabilities for limited war," Army Information Digest, Vol. 14, February, 1959, p. 3.



thermonuclear weapons might cause a new conflict to follow the pattern of World War II. Thus, he has arrived at the possibility of three types of war occurring -- "total thermonuclear war, limited war, general war of great extent involving atomic weapons but still not thermonuclear megaton suicide, the complete exchange of nuclear stockpiles."<sup>7</sup> Like General Taylor, General Daley also pointed out that limited wars need not be small. In General Daley's mind the big war involving nuclear weapons and huge forces but not resulting in thermonuclear suicide is the type of war most often overlooked. According to him, "a nation prepared for a little limited war or the Armageddon of thermonuclear war could still be ruined by this general war particularly if the nation failed to provide for the mobilization of reserve strength in time of crisis."<sup>8</sup>

The Army has acknowledged that the United States has forces designed to meet all these threats. In the area of general war, General Taylor has cited the atomic retaliatory bomber and missile forces, continental air defense forces, the Navy's anti-submarine warfare forces, and civil defense. These forces are necessary but do not contribute to a capability for fighting limited war in his view. In this area (of limited war) the United States does have impressive assets including the Tactical Air Command,<sup>9</sup> the Navy's carrier forces, the strategic air and sea lift forces, and most of the Army and all of the Marines.<sup>10</sup> According to

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<sup>7</sup>Major General John Daley, quoted in New York Times, July 4, 1960, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>According to the Brigadier General Clifton von Kann (Director of Army Aviation), "If there is one Air Force program that the Army is dedicated to -- it is TAC. The Army holds that the TAC mission is one of the most important in the military establishment." Army, Navy, Air Force Journal vol. XCVII, October 31, 1959, p. 2.

<sup>10</sup>Maxwell Taylor, "Improving our capabilities for limited war," Army Information Digest, vol. 14, February, 1959, pp. 4-6.



General Taylor the Army was determined to support emergency operations such as Lebanon through the Strategic Army Corps, a force specially designed to meet the "initial requirements" of limited or general war anywhere in the world. This force could also be reinforced by redeployment of forces already overseas. However, in his opinion "such redeployment of our overseas forces weakens their capabilities in the areas from which they are deployed at the very time that world tensions are increased. Hence in many cases it would be necessary to replace them by additional forces from CONUS (Continental United States)"<sup>11</sup>

This would necessitate a larger standing Army with adequate modern weapons. In order to meet this condition General Taylor outlined a five point program in mid-1959 in order for the country to meet more effectively the possibilities of limited war. These five points included: 1) modernization of military equipment applicable to limited war situations, 2) improvement of the strategic mobility of limited war forces, 3) the pre-planned use of air and sea lift necessary to move these forces, 4) an expanded program for joint planning and training of the elements of limited war forces, and 5) public recognition of our increased capability or coping with the "challenge" of limited war.<sup>12</sup> Such a program, he felt, would greatly add to the nation's assets for fighting limited war and would add credulity to the deterrent posture of the country.

In order to make the Army an efficient fighting force with the ability to fight general atomic war or limited nuclear or conventional

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<sup>11</sup> General Maxwell Taylor quoted in Army, Navy, Air Force Register and Defense Times, vol. 80, April 16, 1959, p. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Army, Navy, Air Force Journal vol. XCVI, June 6, 1959, p. 11.



war a reorganization of the Army's structure was undertaken in 1957.

The key element in this reorganization was the battle group ( a scaled down regiment) in the new division structure. These battle groups would be administratively self-contained units thus enabling a wide dispersal of units on the offense and defense. Such a structure was necessary to prevent the appearance of massed targets to the enemy on the battlefield. The four major principles in this new structure were: 1) the ready adaptability of units to the requirements of the atomic battlefiled, 2) the pooling of higher echelons of command, 3) an increased span of control, 4) the adaptability of new equipment. The new infantry division was scaled down to 13,748 men (previously 17,460) with five battle groups. Each battle group was to contain five rifle companies equipped with mortars and armored personnel carriers, a unit of light tanks, and assorted light artillery. The division also maintained a tank battalion, a transport battalion, and assorted artillery including 105 mm. howitzers, 8 inch howitzers, and Honest John rockets. Thus the Army's infantry division could be used in part to cope with situations short of general war and also be adaptable to the requirements of general war. The same could be said of the armored division which declined in strength but received more aircraft. It was believed that armor would play an increased role in nuclear warfare because of its mobility and the protection afforded by armor plate from blast and fallout. The airborne division became completely air transportable using only one-half the lift of the old division.<sup>13</sup> In this way the Army felt it would have the forces necessary to meet all military situations. This opinion was

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<sup>13</sup> "Army describes new pentomic division." Army, Navy, Air Force Journal, vol, XCIV, March 30, 1957, pp. 1-2.



summed up by General Bruce Clark, the commanding general of the Continental Army Command, who stated:

Our preparedness program is designed for multiple possibilities -- not chained to a single concept of the enemy's intentions. We are preparing to survive an attempt at a nuclear knock-out and fight on with whatever air and naval support remains. We are preparing for a general war -- one in which our national survival is directly at stake. And we are preparing to win the ultimate battle of such a war on the ground where people live. We are preparing to snuff out brushfire wars before they can gain ground, gravity or intensity. And we are seeking the modern sea and air lift to answer an alarm anywhere in the world.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, according to the Army all kinds of war are possible, and the Army has to be prepared to meet them all.

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<sup>14</sup> General Bruce Clark, "Limited war: where do they stand?", Army, Navy, Air Force Register and Defense Times, vol. 80, May, 23, 1959, p. 24.

Wars since 1945

Forces involved in 1000's

| <u>Date</u> | <u>War</u>          |         |        | Total |      | Land Forces |      |
|-------------|---------------------|---------|--------|-------|------|-------------|------|
| 1. 1945-47  | Indonesian War      | Neth.   | Indo.  | 140   | 140  | 130         | 140  |
| 2. 1945-49  | Chinese Civil War   | ChNats. | ChCom. | 1655  | 1622 | 1500        | 1622 |
| 3. 1945-54  | Malayan War         | UK      | Comm.  | 175   | 10   | 160         | 10   |
| 4. 1946-49  | Greek War           | Greece  | Rebels | 211   | 25   | 191         | 25   |
| 5. 1947-49  | Kashmir Dispute     | India   | Pakis. | 97    | 56   | 97          | 56   |
| 6. 1946-54  | Indochina War       | France  | VietM. | 500   | 355  | 450         | 325  |
| 7. 1948-49  | Arab-Israeli War    | Israel  | Arabs  | UN    | UNK  | 98          | 105  |
| 8. 1950-53  | Korean War          | UN      | Comm.  | 970   | 1179 | 884         | 1153 |
| 9. 1954     | Guatemala Revolt    | Govt.   | Rebels | 9     | 5    | 8.8         | 5    |
| 10. 1955    | Argentine Revolt    | Govt.   | Rebels | 16    | 40   | 15          | 5    |
| 11. 1956-58 | Algerian Insurrec.  | France  | Rebels | 490   | 30   | 450         | 30   |
| 12. 1956    | Sinai Campaign      | Israel  | Egypt  | 60    | 35   | 60          | 35   |
| 13. 1956    | UK-Fr. Suez Seizure | UK-Fr.  | Egypt  | 99.5  | 35   | 60          | 35   |
| 14. 1957    | Muscat-Oman         | UK      | Rebels | 2.4   | 0.3  | 1.6         | 0.3  |
| 15. 1956    | Hungarian Suppres.  | Rebels  | USSR   | 40    | 80   | 40          | 70   |
| 16. 1958    | Taiwan Straits      | US-ChN. | Ch.C.  | 200   | 195  | 88          | 135  |
| 17. 1958    | Lebanon-Jordan      | US-UK   | Rebels | UNK   | UNK  | 18          | 11   |
| 18. 1958-59 | Cuba                | Batista | Castro | 43    | 5-8  | 35          | 6-8  |

Chart presented by Secretary of the Army Wilber Brucker and made public in New York Times, January 23, 1959, p. 7.



The attitude of the United States Navy toward limited war has undergone some changes during the period 1957-1959. As long as Admiral Arthur Radford was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Navy supported the policy of massive retaliation. According to Admiral Radford there was no change in the world situation in 1957; there was no nuclear stalemate. "There has been no change in concept. The basic problem has not changed. If you have a little war, you want to win it as soon as possible. You don't want to drag it out."<sup>15</sup>

This attitude changed with Admiral Radford's retirement, which left Admiral Arleigh Burke as the only Navy member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Admiral Burke, together with General Randolph McC Pate of the Marines and most of the naval staff, have been strong supporters of the need to build forces capable of coping with limited war situations. Like the Army, the Navy has maintained the importance of having forces to deal with general war. According to Vice Admiral W. V. Davis, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations, "as a nation we have no alternative but to maintain the ability to deter major nuclear war. The primary element must be a capability for rapid and certain retaliation which no enemy can persuade himself that he can stop, either by perfecting his defenses or by surprise attack on our means of effective retaliation."<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, the Navy has offered criticisms of the nuclear retaliatory buildup. Vice Admiral Davis voiced the opinion that "we must also provide the means of deterring or defeating local aggression.

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<sup>15</sup> Admiral Arthur Radford, news conference, New York Times, August 15, 1957, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Vice Admiral W. V. Davis, "The Navy in limited war", Ordnance, vol. 42, March-April, 1958, p. 605.



To this we must provide weapons, and techniques of delivering them, which will not result in the expansion of the limited action into something larger and more serious."<sup>17</sup> This would require in his opinion a versatile force which could use nuclear or conventional weapons and could get to the scene quickly. Admiral Burke has often expressed the same opinion. He has stated before the defense subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, "I think we do have too much retaliatory power and I think that we should put more money into limited (war) capability."<sup>18</sup> Later in an address before the Naval War College in April of 1959, Admiral Burke criticized our nuclear build-up as a means of preventing both general and limited wars. He stated that the "preparedness for all-out attack has been 'over-accomplished.' What is needed is to widen our sights for adequate preparedness against the more probable courses of action that fall far below the flash point of general war."<sup>19</sup> As Secretary of the Navy, Thomas Gates had also maintained the need for a military strategy capable of meeting all contingencies. In a speech before the Navy League in May, 1959, he declared that a major war was unthinkable because of the huge destruction it would cause, thus opening the way for limited Communist aggressions. In his words, "...we should drive home to the other services and the public the real possibilities of limited war and of the inevitable continuance of the cold war. People in all places should be made aware of the unchanged

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Admiral Arleigh Burke, quoted in New York Times, March 31, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> Admiral Burke as quoted in New York Times, April 8, 1959, p. 6.



Communist objectives for world domination, of their plans to create chaos and disorder, and of their attacks against weak spots, especially against rising new and uncommitted nations. The deployed fleets of the Navy, together with their embarked and ready Marine landing forces, are the nation's most evident and effective response."<sup>20</sup>

The Navy has also demanded the funds to get into the game of providing forces for both general and limited war. Like the Army, the Navy realizes that the stakes in the game are high. They include the costly attack carrier striking forces, sea lift forces, the submarine fleet, the Polaris and other missiles, and the maintenance of the Marine Corps. Of these programs the carriers, sea lift, and Marines have added implications for limited war. The Navy thinks of the attack carrier striking force as a means of fighting nuclear war (as part of the nuclear deterrent with the Strategic Air Command of the Air Force) and of fighting local war with nuclear or conventional weapons. For limited wars the light attack aircraft carrier, the old Essex class, would be used. According to Vice Admiral Davis, "the light attack aircraft carriers are equipped to carry all our air-to-surface weapons except the larger nuclear weapons. The burden of close air support, interdiction, and other limited war missions will be carried out largely by (their) aircraft."<sup>21</sup> The carrier striking force has also been pushed by Admiral Burke, who sees it as "the logical ready military force to counter the threats of limited war in many areas of the world."<sup>22</sup> But he has

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<sup>20</sup>Thomas Gates, "Limited war: where do they stand?", Army, Navy, Air Force Register and Defense Times, vol. 80, May 25, 1959, pp. 24-25.

<sup>21</sup>Vice Admiral Davis, op. cit., p. 804.

<sup>22</sup>Army, Navy, Air Force Journal, vol. XCVI, January 31, 1959, p. 29.



also maintained the need for modernizing these forces. He stated that most of these carriers would be obsolete by 1966 and new carriers would be needed, since "we will continue to need carriers in the future for limited war just as has been repeatedly demonstrated in the past few years, and the need will be urgent, just as it has in the past."<sup>23</sup>

An integral part of the Navy's forces to combat limited war is the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps has of course, supported the need for the attack carrier strike force, since the Marines are the ground forces to be deployed in limited war situations. General Pate, Marine Corps Chief of Staff, has supported this force; he sees amphibious forces as the best means to meet the limited war threat. He wants the country to place its main reliance upon "maritime" strength to meet limited war situations. This would involve using the sea as a base, relying on landing forces where the "men, their logistic substance, and their fire support are all packaged and ready in ships, and are launched upon our enemy from the ocean, in the strength and form demanded by the specific situation."<sup>24</sup> The advantages of this type of force would be that it would not require costly overseas bases, it can lose itself in the ocean and remain undetected and uncommitted, and it could move silently and secretly to trouble spots.<sup>25</sup> Brigadier General Richard Mangrum (Marine Corps Chief of Operations and Plans) has also stated that the helicopterborne Marine landing teams armed with four kinds of missiles and backed by Marine

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<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>General Randolph McC Pate, "How can we cope with limited war?", Army, Navy, Air Force Register and Defense Times, vol. 80, November 28, 1959, p. 16.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.



jet fighters have given the Marine Corps a "new capability" to meet limited war threats.<sup>26</sup>

Thus the Navy and Marine Corps have joined the debate on the side of those who favor preparing an adequate capability to meet the threat of limited war. Such a capability would give the Navy more carriers and troop transports, more aircraft, more missiles. It would give the Marines greater personnel strength, better weapons, and more aircraft. For both it means a greater budget and more prestige and power. Hence, for both services it is the obvious side to take.

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<sup>26</sup> Brigadier General Richard Mangrum, Army, Navy, Air Force Register? vol. 79, January 11, 1958, pp. 3 & 22.

To the United States Air Force the most formidable threat to American security is posed by the intercontinental nuclear missiles and manned aircraft of the Soviet Union. Thus American long-range air power, the capacity to destroy the Soviet Union completely, is the best deterrent and the best means of preventing Russian aggression anywhere. As General Thomas White, Air Force Chief of Staff, has expressed it, "the Soviets have been constrained -- not by the US battalions and ships and tactical aircraft that we deployed -- but constrained to the great degree by the established capacity of American long-range air power."<sup>27</sup> He has also stated that "the United States must be capable of destroying the military power of the enemy. This capability is the foundation of our deterrent posture. This is the only thing that will deter the Soviets from taking aggressive action against our allies and from launching a devastating nuclear attack against the United States."<sup>28</sup> In his viewpoint the Strategic Air Command is the "primary deterrent force," followed by the air defense forces as the next important element in the strategic concept. The least important element, in his opinion, is the tactical air force. The Air Force has a great stake in maintaining a policy of combating the general war threat. It involves manpower, bombers, missiles, and funds. Thus, to the Air Force the policy of exclusive massive retaliation is still valid, and the first priority is to deter the Soviets from launching a surprise nuclear attack on the United States. Budgetary considerations thus place limited war forces in a lower priority.

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<sup>27</sup> General Thomas White, testimony before Senate Armed Services Committee, New York Times, January 28, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup> Army, Navy, Air Force Journal vol. XCVI, January 31, 1959, p. 9.



Furthermore, the Air Force feels that there is no need to prepare separate forces to fight limited wars. According to Secretary of the Air Force James Douglas, "the fundamental Air Force task is to maintain in-being forces of the size and effectiveness to deter general war. In these forces maintained to meet general war requirements, there is a powerful and effective capability, adaptable as appropriate, to meet such limited war situations as may occur."<sup>29</sup> This is the old point of view formulated by Charles Wilson in 1954. Thus the Air Force attitude toward limited war did not change from 1954 to 1959. It was also the point of view of General Nathan Twining when he was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. His attitude was that between the extremes of total nuclear war and "subversive political activity" there were a large number of military and "quasi-military" choices open to the Communists. One of these choices could be limited war. He emphasized that this threat had to be recognized but in his opinion, "the United States capabilities for local or limited war derive in large part from those required to deter or fight a general war. The type of air and sea forces required to control the air and sea lines of communication in general war, in large scale aggressions in the Far East, in Southeast Asia, or in the Mid-East, are also necessary for effectual reaction to smaller scale aggression."<sup>30</sup> The same thing has been said by General White, the Air Force Chief of Staff, who has stated that an "essential aspect of our total general war force is its inherent limited war capability. The Air Force has, within its resources, designed its structure to provide

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<sup>29</sup> James Douglas, "Limited war: where do they stand?" Army, Navy, Air Force Register and Defense Times, vol. 80, May 23, 1959, p. 25.

<sup>30</sup> Army, Navy, Air Force Journal, vol. XCVI, January 31, 1959, p. 31.



the desired general war strength plus a capacity to fight successfully in limited war."<sup>31</sup>

Although the attitude that limited war is possible exists in Air Force circles, there seems to be a divergence of opinion as to the use of air power. There are two schools of thought on this subject in Air Force circles as reported by Colonel E. H. Hampton, Deputy for Evaluation, Air War College. In his view one school believes "that in limited war situations air power can establish conditions that would either be decisive in themselves and thus preclude the need for surface operations or that would establish conditions so favorable as to make successful exploitation of results by surface forces a foregone conclusion."<sup>32</sup> The other school seems to believe "that in limited war the role of air power forces, specifically the Air Force, should be one of primarily supporting surface actions and exploiting surface operations."<sup>33</sup> The actual Air Force view seems to be a combination of both of these schools of thought with the former having somewhat more influence on Air Force policy.

For the purpose of dealing with limited wars the Air Force has created a Tactical Air Command. The Command contains aircraft necessary to perform the variety of air tasks needed in limited war operations. According to General O. P. Weyland, former commander of TAC, the purpose behind TAC was to tailor an air force to meet any limited war threat and eliminate this threat through the use of air power. He stated: "We believe timeliness and quick reaction are of the utmost importance."

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<sup>31</sup>Army, Navy, Air Force Journal, vol. XCVI, November 1, 1958, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup>Colonel E. H. Hampton, "Unlimited confusion over limited war", Air University Quarterly Review, vol. IX, Spring, 1957, pp. 44-45.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.



Generally speaking, the average small, friendly country which is a possible target for local aggression has a capability for effective ground fighting, but few have an appreciable tactical air capability. If they know they will be supported quickly, they may be depended upon to fight in defense of their country."<sup>34</sup> This point of view is similar to the school of thought advocating the use of air power in limited war chiefly to support ground forces. The opposite opinion has been voiced by General White who believes that as the Army develops its atomic weaponry, it reduces the close air support functions of the Tactical Air Force, thus leaving it the role of conducting decisive limited air war campaigns.<sup>35</sup>

Because the Air Force believes that the Communists will concentrate in areas where the United States has no deployed forces, a program known as the Composite Air Strike Force (CASF) Concept was devised whereby the 19th Air Force was established to conduct "on a continuing basis timely studies of all areas of the world in which possible limited conflict might be forced upon members of the Free World."<sup>36</sup> According to Major General Henry Viscellio, commander of the 19th Air Force, the idea of the Composite Air Strike Force was born because "the United States could not afford to station forces in being on a permanent peacetime basis in every locale, sufficient for any eventuality. But a small,

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<sup>34</sup> General O. P. Weyland, "Tactical Air Power", Ordnance vol. 42, March-April, 1958, p. 801.

<sup>35</sup> Army, Navy, Air Force Journal vol, XCIV, August 10, 1957, p. 3.

<sup>36</sup> General O. P. Weyland, "Composite Air Strike Force", Army, Navy, Air Force Journal vol. XCV, December 7, 1959, p. 8.

lethal force, only hours away from any area in the world would be a deterrent, limited only by the effectiveness of the force and the time required to move it to a troubled area."<sup>37</sup> In his opinion the Air Force was fitted for this task because of the speed and range, low cost, and destructiveness of just one air squadron. Such a force would permit leaving deployed forces where they were and still prevent the emergence of "holes" in the defense system. Such a force would also leave the massive retaliation potential of SAC undisturbed.

As previously mentioned, this task was given to the 19th Air Force under General Henry Viscellio. This Air Force commands no units except during actual combat deployment and operations. It trains and commands, identifies landing fields to be used and areas of possible deployment, and names the specific TAC units to be used in the operation. Thus the Composite Air Strike Force provides conventional or nuclear forces which can be dispatched to any area of the world, to be used alone or as part of a joint operation, in a limited war or to replace theater forces sent to other areas of the world thus preventing a gap in the defense posture.<sup>38</sup> The forces used in these operations would come from the 9th and 12th Tactical Air Forces and would consist chiefly of F-100 fighter bombers, Mace and Matador surface-to-surface missiles, transport and support aircraft. In the area of conflict these forces could conduct

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<sup>37</sup> General Henry Viscellio, "Composite Air Strike Force", Air University Quarterly Review, vol, IX, Winter 1956-57, p. 28.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp. 34-35.



counter air operations, interdiction, close air support, tactical reconnaissance, and airlift.<sup>39</sup> In 1958 Composite Air Strike Forces were sent to Lebanon and Formosa, and it was claimed by the Air Force that these forces "helped immeasurably to halt these flare-ups before world-wide nuclear exchange became a possible results."<sup>40</sup>

At least among the commanders of TAC the proposition that the possibility of limited wars occurring in the future began to take hold. In 1959 General Viccellio, commander of the 19th Air Force, expressed this view. He noted: "Perhaps more than anything else, we in TAC are anxious to establish the proper emphasis on limited war versus general war. While our equipment and our missions are compatible with either circumstance, the acceptance of both possibilities we believe will lead to a full appreciation of our military and political environment."<sup>41</sup> This attitude has also been supported by General Frank Everest, the present commander of TAC, who stated that "only if we fail to maintain modern tactical weapons systems will we jeopardize our ability to meet the small war threat."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> "Composite Air Strike Force," Army, Navy, Air Force Journal, vol. XCV, July 19, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>40</sup> General Henry Viccellio, "Composite Air Strike Force 1958," Air University Quarterly Review, vol. X, Summer, 1959, p. 14.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 17.

<sup>42</sup> General Frank Everest, "TAC today," The Airmen, vol. IV, January, 1960, p. 3.

While this is the attitude of TAC, the rest of the Air Force pay only lip service to the forces of the Tactical Air Command. It has been supported by General LeMay who has fought for the maintenance of manned bomber and fighter strength.<sup>43</sup> General White has stated that the composite strike forces "represent a long stride in the direction of fast response to limited war situations,"<sup>44</sup> and he has supported TAC on several occasions.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, as far as fund allocation within the service is concerned, TAC has been the stepchild of the Air Force.

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<sup>43</sup> Army, Navy, Air Force Journal, vol. XCVI, September 6, 1958, p. 14.

<sup>44</sup> Army, Navy, Air Force Journal, vol. XCVI, November 1, 1958, p. 31.

<sup>45</sup> See General White's comments in the Army, Navy, Air Force Journal vol. XCVI, January 31, 1959, p. 35: The Airman vol. III, July, 1959, p. 46: and the Army, Navy, Air Force Register, vol. LXXX, November 28, 1959, p. 17.



The Armed Services have developed a melange of programs to deal with limited war and have a variety of attitudes toward the priority of development of these programs. In the words of Representative George Mahon (D., Tex.), chairman of the defense subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee:

It would appear that under present circumstances each of the three services is seeking to be prepared to do the entire job -- fight the whole war. This, of course, is not the announced policy of each service... The Army wants a strategic-type missile so it can attack distant targets and will not be dependent upon the Air Force even for reconnaissance. The Navy wants a strong air and missile capacity to take care of its own strategic needs and concepts. The Air Force may well want to keep its strategic aircraft mission even after missiles have replaced the strategic mission of manned aircraft. The real battle at present results... from the anxiety which arises over the question of who will dominate the picture in the missile atomic age... However,....the time has come to tear down the costly iron curtain which separates the services.<sup>46</sup>

There is much truth in this statement, although it would be denied by the services. It points to the fact that there is a great political struggle going on among the services in order to maintain their respective budgets and positions.

One of these struggles has been over the need for airlift by the Army to transport its forces quickly to trouble spots in the world. The Army claims it does not have the facilities to move one division by air (this does not apply to the airborne divisions). This opinion has been voiced by Generals (ret.) Gavin and Taylor and by General Lemnitzer, the present Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. According to

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<sup>46</sup> Congressional Record, vol. 105, pt. 6, 85th Congress, 1st Session, May 24, 1957, p. 7605.



General (ret.) Thomas Phillips, the Air Force "has refused to give any priority to furnishing sufficient air transport to carry one or two Army or Marine divisions quickly to the scene of conflict." Air Force officials say that "it (the Air Force) cannot sacrifice the need to build up the Strategic Air Command and air defenses to provide airlift for the Army."<sup>47</sup> Former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Nathan Twining has implied that it is all a matter of priorities. He stated in 1958 that when the Joint Chiefs were considering what they would like to buy the most if they were given an additional \$1.5 or \$2.5 billion, "troop carrier aircraft were not on any service list."<sup>48</sup> In this sense he blamed the services, including the Army, for not pushing increased airlift. Furthermore, he has stated that, in fact, the United States already has sufficient troop airlift, as was shown in the Lebanon incident. In that case, he stated, the United States had more airlift than was needed, for the airfields were not in sufficient quantity to take care of a large airlift. He has even questioned the value of a large-scale airlift by stating, "I do not know of any place except on the mainland of Europe itself where you could really launch a massive airlift of the kind that General Gavin was talking about, two or three divisions."<sup>49</sup>

Yet the Army wants more airlift. This desire does not stem, however, from purely strategic motivation. It would allow the Army to gain extra power without expending any of the Army's budget, as the funds would come

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<sup>47</sup>Army, Navy, Air Force Register, vol. LXXVIII, July 6, 1957, p. 2.

<sup>48</sup>Congressional Record, vol. 104, pt. 15, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, August 21, 1958, p. 18888.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 18892.



from the Air Force Budget. Furthermore, there is the specter of the aircraft industry behind this struggle. An increased airlift would bring bigger contracts to this industry, and thus they advocate more airlift along with an increase in manned aircraft for the services. This attitude has been verified by Robert Gross, chairman of the board of Lockheed Aircraft Corp. in December of 1957 and by Dr. Hall Hibbard, a vice president of Lockheed, in early 1958.<sup>50</sup> While such a program may be beneficial to the country, there is the danger that it may actually do more harm than good. This applies to more airlift as well as to newer missiles and "exotic" weapons. According to Representative William Bray (R., Ind.):

It is interesting that there is always a loudly vocal group which demands that one specific segment of our military be expanded to the exclusion of the others to the detriment of the entire military program. It is also interesting that this demand for a specific weapon is usually made after the 'specific weapon' they are selling is outmoded.<sup>51</sup>

If this is true, then some of the programs which will help build up a limited war force may have fallen by the wayside for selfish, not strategic reasons.

One of the reasons why such programs (such as arms modernization and troop airlift) have lost out is internal. The Army, in a drive to set up a missile program in the mid-1950's, blew its budget, thus preventing a modernization of weapons.<sup>52</sup> However, even after much of the Army's missile program was taken away from it, the Army continued to press for the development of the anti-missile and air defense as a way

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<sup>50</sup>See New York Times, December 11, 1957 and Ordnance vol. 42, March-April, 1958, pp. 614-16.

<sup>51</sup>Congressional Record, vol. 105, pt. 12, 86th Congress, 1st Session, September 1, 1958, p. 17617.

<sup>52</sup>Time, vol. LXXVI, October 17, 1960, p. 26.



of staying in the race for missile control, at the expense of a modernization program. The Air Force has also tied up funds in programs in order to save them, when in some cases were scheduled to be discontinued or were not yet ready to roll. Such was the case in 1956, when it stepped up production of the B-52 at a time when the country was well ahead of the Russians in manned bombers. The same could be said of the liquid boron fuel project on which \$240 million was lavished before it was discontinued.<sup>53</sup> The same can be said of the Matador, Snark, Navaho, and Rascal missiles. The Navy was also guilty of such maneuvering. The Navy's Seamaster bomber was discontinued after \$400 million was spent on it. The Regulus air-breathing missile was obsolete before it was developed, and it too was discontinued.<sup>54</sup>

Another reason programs for limited war have been neglected is because of the fight for missile control among the three services. The Air Force has (as of 1960) three ICBM's in operation or being developed and seven other assorted surface-to-surface, air-to-air, surface-to-air, and air-to-surface missiles operational or in the development stages. The Army has fourteen assorted missiles in operation or being developed, and the Navy has twelve including two underwater-to-underwater missiles.<sup>55</sup> The great cost of these missiles naturally takes up a great portion of the budgets of the services. Greater coordination of these programs could, conceivably, free more funds for limited war programs.

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<sup>53</sup>Congressional Record, vol. 105, pt. 14, 86th Congress, 1st Session, September 1, 1959, p. 17620.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ordnance, vol. 44, March-April, 1960, inset. This is an increase of seventeen over the missiles produced or being developed in 1956.



There is also the problem of waste in the services, due to excessive duplication of facilities and services. The duplication in the missile field was just noted. Others include the existence of marginal and non-essential installations and activities based on outmoded mobilization plans geared for World War II, three different types of supply systems, separate maintenance of communication networks, separate intelligence services, and separate jet trainers used by the Navy and Air Force.<sup>56</sup> These are just a few of many instances of duplication. If this duplication were corrected, the Republicans argue, the country could get a greater or the same degree of defense for a lesser sum of money. However, there are still the obstacles offered by the services themselves in seeking to maintain their own positions.

Thus, the reasons for the attitudes of the armed services toward limited war are as varied as the attitudes themselves. At least all the services see the need for the development of forces to cope with limited war situations. But there is a great deal of difference between mere words and actual deeds.

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<sup>56</sup> Congressional Record, vol. 105, pt. 12, 86th Congress, 1st Session, August 10, 1959, p. 15360.

## Chapter III

The Debate on Limited War  
The Administration

Early in 1957 President Eisenhower appointed H. Rowan Gaither, Chairman of the Board of the Ford Foundation, as chairman of a secret committee to investigate the status of American security. Although originally secret, sections of the report were finally published late in the year. The report stressed the fact that the United States would be moving into a period of military weakness unless spending for military and civil defense were increased. It is not known whether the recommendations of the committee were adopted. They were not even presented to the Senate Armed Services Committee. Some of the reasons given for this action were expressed by Senator Stuart Symington who felt that the administration believed the report to be so "terrifying" in its implications with respect to the current position of the United States, that even Senators were not allowed to look at it.<sup>1</sup> It showed too much dissatisfaction with administration policies and placed them in a bad light. Release of these recommendations in full would be bad publicity and might even have put a scare into our allies. Thus the administration was able to keep the report under the cloak of secrecy, and refused to say what effect these recommendations would have on policy.

Yet, President Eisenhower did use the report as a background in his speech of November 14, 1957, at Oklahoma City. There he stated, "...as a primary deterrent to war, the nation must maintain a strong

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<sup>1</sup> Congressional Record vol. 104, pt. 14, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, August 14, 1958, p. 17523.



nuclear retaliatory power and weapons must keep pace with increasing technological projects. The dispersal and readiness of the Strategic Air Command must be increased so that it will not be destroyed on the ground by missile attack...In cooperation with its Allies, the United States must maintain a flexible force with conventional weapons to put out brush-fire wars before they can spread into all-out nuclear war."<sup>2</sup>

With this speech, the Army began to take heart, believing that the administration was at last ready to heed its advice and recognize the need to have forces capable of meeting all types of aggression. Indeed, it seemed as if this were going to occur, for in May of 1958, the administration announced the formation of the Strategic Army Corps to deal with limited war situations anywhere in the world. It was to be made up of 150,000 infantrymen and paratroopers -- two infantry and two airborne divisions maintained in the United States to meet or reinforce any initial requirements throughout the world. Its effectiveness and speed were dependent upon adequate air and sea lift to be supplied by the Air Force and Navy.<sup>3</sup> Although it seemed impressive, STRAC was a paper organization. It contained many green troops and had a high turnover, and not enough air lift was being supplied by the Air Force to transport one division overseas.<sup>4</sup> However, it was a beginning.

There are two possible explanations for the creation of STRAC. It could have been merely a "sop" thrown to the critics of the administration to quiet them for the time being; or it could have been part of a genuine

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<sup>2</sup>President Eisenhower, quoted in New York Times, December 21, 1957, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>New York Times, May 21, 1958, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Hanson Baldwin, New York Times, May 24, 1958, p. 12.



effort by the administration to cease relying upon the doctrine of massive retaliation to solve all of its defense problems, to begin to see the possibility of limited wars occurring in the future, and to implement policy to provide the forces to meet this threat. If this second reason is taken as valid, certain policy decisions and statements by the administration seem to bear it out. First there was a study ordered by the National Security Council in May of 1958 to examine in detail a score of areas in the world to determine the size and composition of forces required to meet local aggression. Taking part in the study were both State Department and Pentagon officials. Its purpose was to draw up a picture of the world situation in order to determine a basis for a limited war policy to be followed by the administration.<sup>5</sup> This was coupled with an announcement by the Secretary of Defense Neil McElroy at a news conference that month that he planned to publicize American capabilities of meeting limited war situations. He indicated that information on such a capability had been neglected because of the high priority placed on strategic weapons, but that the administration was not neglecting it and that this capability was, in fact, adequate to meet any emergency. However, he did indicate that only by retaining an ability to retaliate with great destructive power available through the Strategic Air Command would general war be less likely than limited war.<sup>6</sup> These statements thus supported the Air Force point of view with regard to priorities of weapons systems<sup>7</sup> and indicated that, although the

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<sup>5</sup>New York Times, May 25, 1958, p. 28.

<sup>6</sup>Neil McElroy, quoted in New York Times, May 30, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup>A weapons system is defined as those "facilities and equipment, in combination or otherwise, which form an instrument of combat to be used by one or more of the military departments." Army, Navy, Air Force Journal, vol. XCVI, June 27, 1959, pp. 1, 36.



administration was thinking about the possibilities of limited wars, the main concern was developing a huge nuclear retaliatory force at the expense of conventional forces.

Nevertheless, by June of 1958 it seemed as if the Army position might be gaining. Due to Army prodding and the rash of "small wars" since 1945 (see page 25a), it seemed that the administration had begun to take notice of the possibility of developing a separate limited war capability. Two major studies on limited war had been started, a third study on troop carrier airlift was also started, and an Army force (STRAC) had been created to deal with any small-scale emergency that might occur.

Secretary McElroy even indicated at a press conference that in the future the Defense Department would make a "greater effort" to stress the country's capacity to cope with limited wars.<sup>8</sup>

This hope was short-lived, however. Late that same month at another press conference Secretary McElroy outlined the chief problems facing the Defense Department -- military spending, choosing among weapons systems, judging the forces required for so-called limited war, continental defenses, and strategic forces for nuclear retaliation. He stressed that there was unanimity in governmental departments that the fundamental deterrent to a war with the Soviet Union was the country's nuclear retaliatory force, and that existing Army and Marine troops equipped with superior weapons were adequate to cope with limited war situations. What came as a bitter blow to the Army was the statement that the nation's future military security lay in priorities for big

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<sup>8</sup> New York Times, June 2, 1958, p. 14.

weapons; he even stressed the use of B-47's equipped with conventional weapons as useful for limited warfare.<sup>9</sup>

The Army position was further downgraded by Donald Quarles, Deputy Secretary of Defense, in a speech at the Marine Corps School in July of 1958. There he put forth a plan to deal with limited wars merely by strengthening the forces of our allies to deter the Communists from starting limited wars.<sup>10</sup> This would then free American efforts to build up retaliatory forces. At the same time he stated, "We must have flexibility to meet any situation, but our overriding objectives must be readiness for this worse eventuality (all-out war), in case our efforts to hold it to small war proportions fail."<sup>11</sup>

Thus, throughout the period 1957-1958 the administration's attitude toward limited war was not very clear. At times Secretary McElroy indicated that more effort would be made to improve the country's ability to cope with limited wars. It did not seem that these indications were sincere, or would be adhered to, for it was evident that the Defense Department as well as the President viewed the troops in-being as sufficient to cope with limited war, and that top priority would still be given the large nuclear weapons. What is evident here is that words, reports, and studies are cheap and can be used to quiet critics who may embarrass the administration. One of these critics was Senator Stuart Symington. In August of 1958 he indicated the uselessness of the policy of the administration of calling in special committees and starting special

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<sup>9</sup> Neil McElroy, press conference, New York Times, June 20, 1958, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> New York Times, July 7, 1958, p. 13.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.



studies which would indicate that action had been taken by the administration to meet new threats to American security. His speech ran as follows:

Time and again in recent years the administration has gotten together an independent group of patriotic citizens to make various reports about the status of our national defense...

When the Rockefeller report was issued, what did it say? It said, in effect, 'We are not doing nearly enough to defend the United States.' What has the result been since that report or rather since sputnik? We have added 1.3 percent to what we were already spending to defend ourselves, which is a great deal less than the administration figures with respect to the devaluation of the dollar over the same period.

Then we had the Gaither report..The report was never released, even to the Senate Armed Services Committee. It was refused the Senate Armed Services Committee and the rumor spread that the report was so terrifying in its implications with respect to the current position of the United States in the world of today that even Senators were not allowed to look at it. Actually, it has never yet been given to the Armed Services Committee.

We come now even to another report, one discovered by the counsel of the Johnson Preparedness Subcommittee, who read about it in the Baltimore Sun. (This refers to the Johns Hopkins study headed by Dr. Ellis Johnson.)

It said in effect, 'This is your (the administration) fault. You people in the administration continue to get groups of outstanding citizens together to make reports. Without exception, they all say that what we are doing is totally inadequate..They all say we could spend billions of dollars more a year on defense without adversely affecting the economy...In other words, every time you set up a committee, that committee says we are not doing enough. Yet we do very little more.'<sup>12</sup>

Although this was a highly partisan speech, it did show that the administration was not fooling everyone.

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<sup>12</sup> Congressional Record vol. 104, pt. 14, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, August 14, 1958, pp. 17523-24.



It could also be said that the statements of Secretary McElroy were also being used merely as a means of temporarily quieting the critics of the administration, while the debate concerning the new budget was in progress. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that at least the administration finally admitted publicly that a study of the country's limited war capability was needed, and that, if the facts warranted it, such a capability would receive further attention. It was apparently not of immediate concern, however.

Thus, in his State of the Union message in January of 1959, President Eisenhower stressed the "formidable air striking forces" of the United States and the great flexibility of this force. He even painted a rosy picture of swift-moving, powerful "ground and tactical" forces moving with "swiftness and precision" to "help cut off threatened aggression."<sup>13</sup> The tone of the speech was unmistakably favorable to the strengthening of the nuclear retaliatory forces, and any mention of the capability to fight limited wars was vague and lightly passed over. This trend was followed in testimony by General Twining and Secretary McElroy before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and Armed Services Committee. Before the Foreign Relations Committee Secretary McElroy indicated that the United States' military power was still adequate to deter the Russians from starting a general war, and that for local warfare the United States had enough conventional firepower to contain the hostilities and prevent them from spreading.<sup>14</sup> Likewise, a glowing report was given to the Armed Services Committee. There McElroy voiced

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<sup>13</sup> President Eisenhower, State of the Union Message, quoted in New York Times, January 10, 1959, p. 6.

<sup>14</sup> New York Times, January 17, 1959, p. 1.



the old Charles Wilson line that the United States' ability to deal with limited war situations was derived from its forces for waging general war.<sup>15</sup> However, it is difficult to see how the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of Defense could be anything but optimistic concerning defense policies; essentially the policies were their own and thus had to be defended.

To the administration at that time the overall United States military posture seemed good. In all fields of weaponry the United States seemed to be ahead or equal with the Russians. Russia had 150 heavy bombers compared to the United States' 500-600; 1000 medium bombers to the U.S.'s 1500; hundreds of 700-800 mile missiles compared to 4 U.S. Thor (1500 mi.) squadrons in Great Britain; the two were even in ICBM's; Russia had no fleet carriers to the U.S.'s 14; 450 submarines (none missile-firing or nuclear) to the U.S.'s 33 nuclear submarines and 150 conventional submarines; 175 divisions to the U.S.'s 17.<sup>16</sup> This added up to a nuclear superiority for the United States, but indicated a lack in limited war forces, as nuclear weapons could not be viewed as substitutes for a limited war capability. Furthermore, these published figures on Russian strength were at best "guesstimates" and way behind current intelligence. Thus, while the administration had confidence in its policies, it was hard to tell where the United States stood in relation to the Soviet Union and just how effective our forces were. According to the Army and Navy, we were behind.

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<sup>15</sup> New York Times, January 21, 1959, p. 11

<sup>16</sup> Hanson Baldwin, New York Times, April 5, 1958, IV, p. 3.



Although the United States seemingly had this "nuclear superiority," it was evident that the Defense Department was facing serious problems. The Army and Navy were ranged against the Air Force with regard to the strength of the deterrent for general war, the Army and the Navy still maintaining that an overkill capacity existed and that more funds should be allocated for limited war forces; while the Air Force maintained that we must have sufficient forces to "destroy the enemy's ability to destroy us." There was also the Army view that more manpower and funds were needed to develop a capability for waging limited wars, with or without nuclear weapons. These were the major problems of importance to this paper, although there were others.<sup>17</sup>

Up to his retirement on December 2, 1959, and in spite of these problems, Secretary McElroy reiterated his belief that the United States had a sufficient capability to deal with limited war as well as general war, even though the Army and Navy were saying that this was not so. With the appointment of Thomas Gates as Secretary of Defense in December of 1959, a new variable entered the picture, for Mr. Gates as Secretary of the Navy had been a strong supporter of cutbacks in expenditures for increased nuclear deterrent in order to develop limited war forces. What his attitude as Secretary of Defense is going to be will be interesting to note.

Thus from 1957 to 1959 the administration, although at times forceful in maintaining the superiority of the American military structure, seemed hesitant about stating what its position in regard to limited war actually

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<sup>17</sup> For other problems facing the Pentagon and Defense Department, see the New York Times, May 4, 1959, p. 23 and May 5, 1959, p. 20.



was. At no time did it define its policies toward limited war. Time and again the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and the President indicated that the country possessed adequate forces to meet all situations, while at the same time, they ordered studies to determine whether these capabilities were in fact adequate. Then, when these studies and reports indicated that more had to be done, the Administration refused to act. Although the Army, the Navy, and other administration personnel reiterated the need for a change in emphasis in defense policy, the administration remained committed to the concept of massive retaliation as a panacea for all military problems. There was no change in priorities during this period, and the attitude remained the same as it was in 1954.

## Chapter IV

The Debate on Limited War  
Congress

The debate over the country's defense posture has increased in sharpness in the halls of Congress from 1957 to 1959. During this period it has also become more partisan in character. In the debate limited war has taken an important role. The debate is essentially over whether the country is spending enough to insure adequate defense. The Democrats have argued that we are extending our commitments without providing adequate forces to meet them and that we are relying too heavily on massive retaliation to solve all our military problems. The Democrats have also felt that the administration has made too much of an effort to economize at the expense national security. The Republican minority, on the other hand, has continually backed administration policy and has felt that the backbone of a strong defense is a strong economy. They have refused to agree to increasing the defense budget to the sums asked for by the Democrats but have reluctantly had to go along with the majority. On the whole, especially in the Senate, they have tended to view forces required for massive retaliation as sufficient to deter the Communists from starting any local wars. This chapter will try to cover the course of this debate, with particular emphasis on limited war, from 1957 to 1959.

The first session of the 85th Congress during 1957 was marked by a particular lack of conflict over the defense issue, especially with regard to limited war forces. The Democrats tended to show partisanship in their speeches on national defense, but they were not as sharp as those in 1958, or 1959. The main reason for this lack of sharpness and



interest in the debate was that there was not a clear enough Democratic majority in the Senate (49 Democrats and 47 Republicans) to permit the Senate to act with bold authority to counter administration policy. Neither party could rally their forces in the House. Furthermore, there were no pressing international incidents (such as Lebanon and Formosa in 1958) to bring about sharp conflicts in Congress. Also, the first sputnik was launched too late in the year to have any effect on this session. Finally, it seemed as if the drastic need for more limited war forces had not taken hold in either party in 1957.

In the House in 1957 both Democrats and Republicans voiced the same opinion with regard to national defense and limited war. They both voiced the need for economy and forces adequate to meet all military threats. The Democratic position was clarified by Rep. Robert Sikes (D., Fla.) who said that "if limited wars are to be the pattern or if Russia suddenly moves to occupy all of Europe, we must have trained and equipped troops on the ground and ready."<sup>1</sup> Several Republicans spoke for their side and all agreed that a sound economy was necessary if the country was to continue to enjoy prosperity. But in the words of Rep. Joseph Martin (R., Mass.), "the poorest place in the world to begin that economy is risking our national security."<sup>2</sup> Likewise, Rep. Leslie Arends (R., Ill.) stated that "we are not willing to commit the sin of risking the safety of our country in the name of economy."<sup>3</sup> In a speech in June of 1957 Rep. James Van Landt (R., Pa.) also voiced the need for the

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<sup>1</sup> Congressional Record, Vol. 103, pt. 6, 85th Congress, 1st Session, May 27, 1957, p. 7723.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., May 28, 1957, p. 7898.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 7898.



maintenance of a sound massive retaliatory capacity as well as a "capacity to fight small or limited wars with the use of either tactical atomic weapons or of conventional arms, as the circumstances may require."<sup>4</sup> During this session in the House these statements were scattered and for the most part, brief. There were no major speeches on defense in the House during 1957, and the speeches that were made usually agreed with each other.

The same tended to be true in the Senate in 1957. There was no apparent debate over the country's defense posture, and what disagreement that did show up occurred within the ranks of the Democratic party. To Senator Dennis Chavez (D., N.M.), the chairman of the defense subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee, the possibility that the United States might have to face limited wars in the future was great, but the existing deterrent forces were adequate to prevent these wars from breaking out into general war.<sup>5</sup> The chief opposition to this attitude came from Senator Paul Douglas (D., Ill.) in a major speech on defense policy. He stated that we had increased our commitments but had reduced the "military strength which we need to help check probing operations and limited wars started by the Communist bloc."<sup>6</sup> He cited the existence of the nuclear stalemate, and said that what was needed to prevent the outbreak of limited wars under the umbrella of this stalemate was "a sufficient force in readiness, well-equipped and trained, which can be rushed to crucial points which the Communists are either attacking

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., pt. 3, July 1, 1957, p. 10264.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 10619.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 10654.



or threatening to attack."<sup>7</sup> Yet, he felt that this was the portion of our armed services that was being slighted by the emphasis being placed on the "major deterrents." The same sentiment was echoed by Senators Stuart Symington (D., Mo.), Joseph O'Mahoney (D., Wyo.), Mike Mansfield (D., Mont.), and Henry Jackson (D., Wash.).<sup>8</sup>

Conspicuously, during this whole session there were no speeches by the Republicans on this matter, nor were the efforts of the Democrats overly strong. On the whole, in both the House and the Senate, 1957 was a relatively quiet year in the area of national defense and limited war. Thus, there were no real, strong attitudes on either side, nor were there any clear cut issues to divide the two sides on partisan ground.

In contrast to 1957, the second session of the 85th Congress in 1958 was the direct opposite. The debate over defense, and especially limited war, became more heated and the parties began to take opposite sides, the Republicans defending existing force levels and the use of massive retaliation and the Democrats favoring more spending and less reliance on massive retaliation to meet all military emergencies. One of the chief reasons for this upsurge in the debate was the fact that 1958 was an election year, causing both parties to clarify their positions and attack each other. The Republicans naturally began to defend the administration's policy, while the Democrats tended to attack them. In the non-partisan area, the tightening of tensions in Lebanon and the Formosa straits caused Congress to take more notice of the possibilities of limited wars, and thus Congressional opinion, especially in the Senate,

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 10668-71.



began to favor the build-up of forces necessary to fight limited wars and to improve the defense establishment of the United States in general.

In May of 1958 the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee issued a seventeen point program for decisive action in the area of defense. This program was arrived at on a non-partisan basis and was signed by both Democratic and Republican members of the committee. These points were detailed and covered all areas of defense. The program is as follows: 1) the modernization and strengthening of SAC; 2) step up in the dispersal of SAC bases; 3) more effort in developing anti-missile missiles; 4) improvement of the early warning system; 5) modernization and strengthening of the ground and naval forces; 6) adequate airlift for ground forces; 7) a greater anti-submarine warfare program; 8) greater production of Atlas, Thor, and Jupiter missiles and accelerated development of the Titan; 9) reduction in the lead time in the development of weapons systems; 10) freer exchange of scientific and technological information among nations of the Free World; 11) development of a rocket motor with a million pound thrust; 12) more shelters and greater stockpiles for civil defense; 13) reorganization of the structure of the defense establishment; 14) increased incentives for the retention of trained personnel in the armed services; 15) acceleration of all research and development programs; 16) more development of manned missiles; and 17) acceleration of the Polaris missile system.<sup>9</sup> Of particular importance for limited war were the provisions for modernizing the Army, Navy, and Marines, and providing for more airlift. As will be shown later, all

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<sup>9</sup> Congressional Record, Vol. 104, pt. 8, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, May 29, 1958, pp. 9790-97.



these features were incorporated in the defense appropriations bill for the fiscal year 1959 by Congress. Thus, this program became the program of the Senate toward national defense, since the defense bill was supported by every Senator who voted.

The concept of limited war also received a boost by the Senate Armed Services Committee. In its report of July 30, 1958, the Committee indicated that the country needed a greater limited war capability in view of the existence of the nuclear stalemate:

The committee feels most strongly that the Department of Defense should maintain a greater vigilance in establishing "limited war" capabilities. It seems obvious that if the world's two greatest powers reach a nuclear stalemate wherein differences between them cannot be resolved except by resort to total war, then the situation may well indeed be similar to that described by the phrase, "of two scorpions in a bottle," i.e., mutual annihilation. If one assumes that nuclear stalemate can be reached, one must also assume that the Soviet Union would then be free to again exercise the advantage of its great superiority in numbers and interior lines of communication and that it could proceed to disrupt the world by piecemeal tactics, subversion, and other pressures backed by the presence of its conventional forces...

In light of this the committee cannot help but wonder why the Army has placed such a great emphasis on fixed defense (point) weapons systems which the Committee believes has caused a diminution of the Army's ground combat capability (its principal and most important mission). The Committee believes the Army should take stock of itself and shall re-direct its efforts toward providing the U.S. with the finest forces in the world capable of victorious sustained ground combat...

We must place greater emphasis on our striking power and limited war capabilities. We must take decisions to eliminate duplication in defensive weapons systems, and the defensive weapons systems which we retain should not be designed in the futile attempt to obtain 100 percent defense<sup>10</sup> but rather to insure the security of our striking capability.

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<sup>10</sup> Congressional Record, vol. 104, pt. 12, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, July 30, 1958, pp. 15543-50.



This report is interesting in that it chastises the Army for not devoting enough of its own funds to modernization rather than to continental air defense, thus pointing up the fact that much of the Army's problem may be internal. Furthermore, this was the second report by a Congressional Committee on the inadequacy of the nation's defense forces. And like the former report, the 1956 Senate Preparedness Subcommittee report, this one was also signed by both Republicans and Democrats.

Although these non-partisan reports indicated that not all of Congress was satisfied with the country's defense forces and that the Lebanon and Formosa affairs were having their effect with regard to limited war forces, the debates following these reports became highly partisan and were influenced largely by the coming off-season election. Senator John Kennedy (D., Mass.) opened the debate on national defense with a major speech on August 14, 1958. This speech showed where most of the Democrats in the Senate stood with regard to defense. He first outlined the world situation facing the U.S. and the Soviet Union and then described the threat posed by the Communists. He stated:

...One of the key premises upon which our leaders of diplomacy, defense, and public opinion have based their policy thinking...has been, since Hiroshima, our nuclear power. We have possessed a capacity for retaliation so great as to deter any potential aggressor from launching a direct attack upon us. Spokesmen for both parties, in the Senate and elsewhere, have debated our preparedness upon the assumption that this "ultimate deterrent" would deter any Soviet attack...Possession of similar striking power by the Soviet Union has not altered this basic premise -- it is instead described now as the result of a "nuclear stalemate," a point of "mutual saturation;" or a "balance of terror."

In the years of the missile gap, the Soviets may be expected to use their superior striking ability to achieve their objectives in ways which may not require launching an actual attack. Their missile power will be the shield from behind which they will slowly, but surely, advance.--



through sputnik diplomacy, limited brushfire wars, indirect nonvert aggression, intimidation and subversion, internal revolution, increased prestige or influence, and the vicious blackmail of our allies. The periphery of the Free World will slowly be nibbled away...Each such Soviet move will weaken the West; but none will seem sufficiently significant by itself to justify our initiating a nuclear war which might destroy us...This may well be the most important threat to the United States.<sup>11</sup>

In order to counter this threat, Senator Kennedy indicated that more air tankers, air-to-ground missiles, atomic submarines, solid fuels, Polaris and Minuteman ICBM's were needed. He also attacked the airlift capacity of the services by stating that "it should be obvious from our Lebanon experience that we lack the sea and air lift necessary to intervene in a limited war with the speed, discrimination, and versatility which may well be needed to keep it limited -- and without weakening our ultimate retaliatory power."<sup>12</sup> The speech was hailed by Democratic Senators Symington, Jackson, Mansfield and Hill, but opened the way for partisan attacks by the Republicans in an outburst that had been completely absent in 1957. The rebuttal was started by Senator Homer Capehart (R., Ind.) who brought up the issue of partisanship and set the tone for further rebuttal by the Republicans. In effect, he said that "...there is a concerted effort on the part, not of all Senators, but of a few Senators on the opposite side of the aisle to discredit, 100 percent, the President of the United States; to sell our Defense Establishment short; and to make statements which, in my opinion, could give comfort to the enemy because they are constantly repeated."<sup>13</sup> He went on to blame the Democrats for any short-

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<sup>11</sup> Congressional Record, vol. 104, pt. 14, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, August 14, 1958, pp. 17569-71.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 17572.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 17575.



comings in national defense, and this theme, as well as his plea to stop "selling our defenses short," was taken up by other Republicans. Senator Leverett Saltonstall (R., Mass.) voiced this sentiment by saying:

...Let us not sell ourselves short. The Soviets may be ahead of us in some developments. But when some persons base their conclusions on estimates of Russian efforts, as compared with our efforts, when actually the Russians' are merely estimates and are not hard, certain evidence, then I am worried. There is a great deal of difference between making a judgment based on estimates of what we think the Soviets are doing and making a judgment based on what we know they are doing...

We must strike the proper balance between the weapons of the future and the weapons we need today. We cannot hope to concentrate on each year's military weaponry to the same extent that the Russians, if they choose to attack us, can concentrate on the weaponry of the one particular time they may select for attack.<sup>14</sup>

The thesis behind the Saltonstall speech was that existing forces should be built up before going on to more advanced weapons. In this respect he was also following the views of the Senate Armed Services Committee and several Democrats. His desire was to strike a balance between present and future weapons, but where he and the Democrats differed was over the fact that he felt that this balance had already been achieved, whereas the Democrats did not think so.

Senator Kennedy's attack on the country's airlift capacity for limited wars was countered by General Twining (see page 39) and by Senator Prescott Bush (R., Conn.) who felt that air lift in Lebanon was not a problem and that we actually had an abundance of air and sea lift for troops.<sup>15</sup> Senator Frank Barrett (R., Wyo.) launched a speech

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<sup>14</sup> Congressional Record, vol. 104, pt. 15, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, August 21, 1958, pp. 18887, 18889.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., pp. 18891-92.



praising administration policies, noting its "magnificent accomplishments," and expressing the opinion that we should place our chief reliance for defense upon manned aircraft, ballistic missiles, SAC airborne alerts, anti-missile missiles, the Polaris, and early warning systems; but he made no mention of the limited war threat or the need for forces to meet this threat.<sup>16</sup>

Many of the same opinions were expressed in the House, although they were not as heated. There were even disagreements between members of the Republican party, while the Democrats held virtually the same opinions as their colleagues in the Senate. One of the few Republicans to recognize the need for adequate limited war forces was Rep. Francis Dorn (R., N.Y.). He emphasized the need for these forces as well as deterrent forces capable of dealing a "certain deathblow" to any aggressor. He felt that limited war was becoming more likely and forces were needed to counter this threat. He did not specify economizing on the budget, nor did he attack the Democrats, the main administration critics.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, Reps. William Bray (R., Ind.) Timothy Sheehan (R., Ill.) followed the line set forth by Senators Saltonstall and Caphart. They attacked the need for the spending of more funds and countered Senator Kennedy's speech. Mr. Bray defended the administration by saying:

The Army is being reorganized into a Pentomic structure that allows small but heavily armed, highly mobile forces to operate over a great territory without support from other units.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 18397-98

<sup>17</sup> Congressional Record, vol. 104, pt. 4, 85th Congress, 2nd Session, March 19, 1958, p. 4817.



We do have today the capacity to launch a nuclear war if that necessity ever confronts us. We have the capabilities of protecting American interests in a limited conventional war...<sup>18</sup>

The administration was also defended by Mr. Sheehan who blamed any failures in defense on the Truman administration, thus conducting a purely partisan attack upon the Democrats.<sup>19</sup>

Thus, in Congress 1958 was a year of charge and counter-charge with regard to defense policy. There were several different opinions expressed, as this melange of statements and speeches has shown; yet a general attitude favoring an increase in limited war forces as well as other elements of defense was beginning to grow. The Republican cry was "Let us not sell American short," and as this was an election year, the party vociferously defended administration policy (especially in Lebanon and Quemoy) and warned the Democrats to use caution in their attacks. On the other hand, the Democrats used the defense issue as a tool in their campaign to increase their majorities on both Houses. However, the reports of the Senate Preparedness Subcommittee and the Armed Services Committee showed that Congress was beginning to take an increased interest in defense, and the need for a larger defense force was starting to take hold due to the events in Lebanon and Formosa.

The 86th Congress was essentially a Democratic Congress, as the Democrats increased their majority in each House (64 to 34 in the Senate and 280 to 152 in the House). The Democrats began to increase their efforts to appropriate more funds for defense. Looking ahead to the Presidential election in 1960 the Democrats increased their attacks upon the Eisenhower administration, and in the struggle they finally

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pt. 14, August 14, 1958, p. 17667.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 18588.



adopted (at least in the Senate) an attitude very favorable to the build-up of more adequate forces to fight limited war and thus generally agreed with the attitude of the Army and Navy toward this need. Massive retaliation became one of the prime targets of Democratic attacks on administration policy.

Senator Hubert Humphrey (D., Minn.) opened the Democratic attack in February of 1959 with the following statements:

By now we should understand the folly of narrow, doctrinaire thinking and planning in the field of national security. The idea that Communism could be contained by the threat of "massive retaliation" became an absurdity almost as soon as it was advanced. Yet how much of our present military budget is still a hangover from those days?

Until the day when the first sputnik went up, we persisted in happy ignorance, in believing that we held an unshakeable deterrent in the form of our strategic air arm.

We are persisting yet in believing that because we possess a large family of tactical nuclear weapons, we have an effective deterrent against the employment of Communist ground forces. The "More Bang for a Buck" slogan...still distorts and twists the thinking of those who hold the military pursestrings in the administration. Yes, not even the Lebanon and Formosa straits crises have produced any concrete demonstration that the top levels of the administration realize that the conventional forces are fast rebounding to the center stage.

...Among the two great gaps...in our national armor is the failure to maintain even a fraction of the modernized, mobile, but conventional forces needed to deter Communistic conventional probing and attacks.<sup>20</sup>

These statements set the theme of the Democratic attack on the administration for holding back limited war forces. This attitude was repeated by Democratic Senators Lyndon Johnson, Russell Long, Paul Douglas and Richard Russell, who attacked the administration action

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<sup>20</sup> Congressional Record, vol. 105, pt. 2, 86th Congress, 1st Session, February 17, 1959, p. 2507.



of impounding funds voted by Congress for defense.<sup>21</sup> Republicans in response to these criticisms did not defend administration policy but warned the Democrats to use restraint when dealing with the subject of military strategy, for such statements would seem to make them military experts when, in fact, they were not.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, the Democratic onslaught continued. Senator John Stennis (D., Miss.) deplored the administration action of cutting STRAC by one division,<sup>23</sup> and Senator Mike Monroney (D., Okla.) said he was

...alarmed at the growing evidence of the administration's neglect of our conventional ground forces..I submit that not only do we lack adequate forces to meet local emergencies, but we are not developing the airlift capability required to insure that we can rapidly and efficiently apply conventional forces at points of danger..A flagrant example of the failure to appreciate the importance of our military airlift potential is the postponement of the tactical airlift exercises -- due to lack of operational and maintenance funds in the MATS budget.<sup>24</sup>

These attacks were a concentrated effort by the Democrats who thought that the administration had to wake up and heed the advice of Congress which constitutionally had been given the right to raise armies and support them.

Although the Republicans generally supported the Eisenhower policies, they did agree with the Democrats that the defense establishment had to be expanded. This, they agreed, would cost more money. But they felt that the funds could come from economizing in other programs such as cutting out waste in foreign aid, eliminating the creation of more government agencies, programs and functions not concerned with survival,

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., pt. 3, March 9, 1959, pp. 3502-06.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 3542.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., p. 3767



economizing in government activities, postponing all but urgently needed government programs, stopping the waste of funds by the services themselves, enforcing present tax rates, and increasing economic growth. In this respect both Democrats and Republicans agreed. Senator Paul Douglas even cited examples of waste in procurement by the armed services. He cited a survey by the House Committee on Government Operations which showed that of the \$44 billion of property owned by the armed services, \$14.5 billion was for operating purposes and \$12.1 billion to mobilize the reserve in case of war. This left \$17 billion as surplus which the armed services could put to better use in missiles or modernization.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, as the next chapter will show, Congress has appropriated more funds than the administration for the armed services in an effort to build up the country's defense forces in all area.

In the House, the preparedness debate followed much the same pattern as it did in the Senate. The Democrats argued for more spending and criticized administration policy; the Republicans called for balancing the budget and defended the administration's policies. However, on the subject of limited war and the forces to combat them, there were sharp disagreements in both parties with Democrats and Republicans often taking the same side. As was the case in the Senate, partisanship entered the debates in the House. The sharpest exchange occurred between Reps. Daniel Flood (D., Pa.) and Frank Becker (R., N.Y.). In Rep. Flood's words:

In the face of the increasing Soviet threat, the administration suffers from a case of aggravated complacency. The administration is meeting the mounting criticality of the situation with a bland diet of daydreaming and wishful thinking and unwillingness to come to grips with the everpresent problem that refuses to fade away....It is a gross disservice to our

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<sup>25</sup>Congressional Record, vol. 105, pt. 5, 86th Congress, 1st Session. April 22, 1959, p. 8453.



nation...that this offensive of Soviet threats and grim pronouncements of America's forthcoming doom finds its primary response by the Eisenhower administration in a rising chant of what I term phony economy.<sup>26</sup>

He thus felt that the administration was not making the necessary preparations for the conduct of limited war. Rep. Becker countered this by claiming that the Democrats were too concerned with military preparations for defense and were ignoring the need for defense against the total Communist threat (military, political, economic, and social). He then blamed the Democrats for the failure of the B-36 program, the delays in the H-bomb and missile programs, and cutbacks in military personnel in all the services.<sup>27</sup> The most partisan statement of the session came from Rep. Stephen Derounian (R., N.Y.) who said that the Truman administration "spent more for peanuts between 1947 and 1952 than it did on intermediate and long-range missiles."<sup>28</sup> Although these remarks were highly partisan they did not reflect the attitude of the whole House, and often Republicans and Democrats joined sides.

The sharpest division of opinion over defense policy came of the discussion of limited war and the forces needed to cope with these wars. Democrats such as Clarence Cannon and George Mahon were against the buildup of limited war forces. Mr. Cannon attacked the build-up of manpower in the Army and the construction of more carriers for the Navy. In his opinion the majority of funds should go for more missiles and submarines.<sup>29</sup> Rep. Mahon, chairman of the Appropriations Committee,

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., pt. 2, February 18, 1959, p. 2590.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., pt. 4, March 18, 1959, pp. 4523-28.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 4526.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., March 14, 1959, pp. 5066-67.



issued the following report and warning:

We need to continue, as we have in recent years, to face up to the stark reality that the issue involved is the survival of the United States. Preparation for limited war is necessary...and such effort is proceeding. There are some weaknesses. We do not have enough mobility. We provided some mobility funds above the budget last year to cope with the same small war threat. Yes; preparation for limited war is proceeding. But to emphasize preparation for limited war as top priority consideration is to invite disaster, is to invite general war.

Adequate preparation for total war is the best possible deterrent to limited war. This is true because of the great danger that any limited war of consequence may very probably expand into general war.

Is it not true that if we are able to cope with all the aspects of general war the chances are we will be able to meet the limited war threat?....We have an Army of 870,000 men trained in versatile types of military procedure. We have a Navy; we have the Marines. We have amphibious landing capability. We have 23 active carriers. We have the Tactical Air Force. We have troop carrier aircraft. We have a variety of weapons designed to be useful in general war and in limited war.

Let us make sure we are reasonably well prepared for limited, war, but let us make it even more certain that beyond peradventure of doubt that we have the ability in great abundance to deter global war and to cope with the eventuality should such a war be forced upon the... people of this....Nation.<sup>30</sup>

This attitude received Republican support from Harold Osteray of New York who believed that as long as "we maintain a retaliatory force of unquestionable power, it is believed that no possible enemy would resort to an all-out attack upon the U.S."<sup>31</sup> Refutation of this position came from Republicans and Democrats alike. Republicans Gerald Ford of Michigan and William Bray of Indiana supported the need for more forces for

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<sup>30</sup> Congressional Record, vol. 105, pt. 7, 86th Congress, 1st Session. June 2, 1959, pp. 9595-94.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 9605

for limited war, especially new carriers. Mr. Bray expressly cautioned against the use of massive retaliation forces for limited war and warned that conventional forces had to be increased.<sup>32</sup> Democratic support came from Reps. Ed Edmondson of Oklahoma, Leroy Anderson of Montana, and Daniel Flood of Pennsylvania.

Thus in 1959 the House seemed divided on the issue of limited war while the Senate stood more firm for the implementation of a policy to increase the country's limited war capacity. Also, the period 1957 to 1959 showed an increase in the tempo of the debate over limited war. This was caused by the Lebanon and Formosa incidents, sputnik, the election of 1958 and the Presidential election of 1960. Generally the Democrats in the Senate favored the increase in limited war forces while the Republicans remained non-committal but went along with the Democratic majority. In the House, opinion was more divided, with Democrats and Republicans often joining sides. However, as will be shown in the next chapter, the general attitude in Congress was favorable to limited war and to the increase in defense forces. While this chapter dealt with words, the next will deal with deeds.

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., pp. 9605 and 17619.



## Chapter V

The Debate on Limited War  
Congress, the Administration, and the Budget

Chapter III has shown that since 1957 the Administrations' attitude toward limited war and the forces needed to cope with, such wars has not been very clear, but has at times seemed favorable. This has been shown by statements made by President Eisenhower, Secretary of Defense McElroy, and other Administration officials. However, this is only one side of the picture. In order for these pronouncements to have any weight attached to them, they have to be backed up by actual policy decisions. To say that the country needs a limited war capability is one matter; to provide definite measures to implement this policy is another. What will be shown in this chapter is that while the Administration has often agreed to the necessity of building up a limited war capability, it has tended to refuse to implement the policy to the satisfaction of its critics, in spite of Pentagon and Congressional approval of the policy. Moreover, the debate over military preparedness has become a partisan matter with the Democratic Congress demanding and legislating an increasing amount of defense funds which include provisions for building up a limited war capability (more troop transport), while the Administration, believing the defense force to be adequate, has been more concerned with balancing the budget and with reducing arms, especially those suited for limited war. The Administration still views all-out war as the greatest military threat facing the country, and has thus placed a greater emphasis on "push button" weapons, the cost of which has prevented the development and purchase of conventional weapons

suitable for limited war purposes. While Congress, the Army, and Navy have also stressed the need for "push button" weapons, they have felt that these are not enough to maintain an adequate defense posture. Thus, they demand more funds for less massive weapons. The following discussion will illustrate these points.



In his annual budget message to Congress in January of 1958 President Eisenhower said, "Americans are determined to maintain our ability to deter war and to repel and decisively counter any possible attack." However, "the greater increase in efficiency permit a further reduction in the number of military personnel. Procurement of older types of weapons and equipment is also being reduced."<sup>1</sup> These two statements set the trend for the Administrations' defense budget for the fiscal year 1958 (1 July 1957-30 June 1958). It was a budget which showed a greater reliance on push-button weapons. While planned expenditures for troops and conventional weapons, including jet aircraft, went down, expenditures for missiles and outer space weapons went up. More than 75 percent of funds allotted to weapons procurement would go for weapons not even in production. Of these funds 24 cents of every dollar would go towards missile production (as opposed to 2 cents in 1953 and 15 cents in 1957).<sup>2</sup> President Eisenhower, however, did add a condition, whereby, "while greater attention is given in this budget to the foregoing areas (missiles, SAC), conventional warfare capabilities of the military services are also being improved. For example, funds are provided to initiate production of new models of small arms and ammunition, standardized for use by all members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization."<sup>3</sup> Yet the Army was the only service to be allotted less funds than

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<sup>1</sup> President Eisenhower, budget message, New York Times, January 14, 1958, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> New York Times, January 14, 1958, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> President Eisenhower, budget message, New York Times, January 14, 1958, p. 17.



it had previously received,<sup>4</sup> and thus was still a decade behind the Soviets in bringing out new families of conventional weapons.

Actually, the defense budget (\$39,779,000,000) was a record for a peacetime budget. This increase in military appropriations was justified by President Eisenhower, as it was "necessary for a speedup in the adjustment of military strategy, forces, techniques, and organization to keep pace with the rapid strides in science and technology."<sup>5</sup> Yet, it was a compromise budget - a compromise "between a continual desire for a budget as close to balance as possible and the satellite-induced need for more military expenditures,...between the need for strong operating forces ready to fight tomorrow and the need for increased amounts for future weapons,...between the number of men and ships and planes and the increased mobility and firepower of recently developed weapons," and "between various views of Russian strength..."<sup>6</sup> While it increased the country's ability to retaliate against a massed nuclear attack in the present and in the future, it showed a continuing decrease in the country's ability to fight limited, and especially non-nuclear, war. In fact, there were only vague references in the budget message to the need for forces to deal with limited wars. This can be best illustrated by expenditures allotted to the Army forcing it to decrease its strength by one more division and 50,000 men, and the President's supplemental appropriations

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<sup>4</sup>While the Army suffered a cut of \$163 million to a total of \$8 billion and the loss of one more division; the Air Force received \$18.7 billion, an increase of \$295 million; and the Navy received \$10.9 billion, an increase of \$273 million.

<sup>5</sup>President Eisenhower, budget message, New York Times, January 14, 1958, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup>Hanson Baldwin as quoted in New York Times, January 14, 1958, p. 22.



bill of April, 1958 for \$1.4 billion in added funds for missiles, aircraft, submarines, and expanding research in "high priority defense programs."<sup>7</sup>

To highlight the partisan nature of the fight over the budget, the House voted for a larger budget, one which, against Presidential desires, would retain Army strength at 900,000 men, the National Guard at 400,000, the Army Reserves at 300,000 and the Marines at 200,000. All services were voted larger funds amounting to \$212,614,000 more than the President has asked.<sup>8</sup> The Democratic Senate moreover, passed a \$40 billion defense budget (\$1.8 billion more than the House had voted) reflecting a Congressional doubt about the nation's capacity to fight limited wars while being able to deter general war on the sum requested. The added \$1.2 billion were for increases in missile-firing submarines, jet bombers and tankers, and troop-carrying aircraft to increase ground mobility.<sup>9</sup> It was felt, therefore, by Congress that any decrease in military manpower would weaken the ability of the country to deal with small-types of aggression. According to Senator Dennis Chavez (D., N.M.), "the scientists with the button will never erase the need for the G.I."<sup>10</sup> Later, this appropriation was cut by a Senate-House committee to only \$815 million more than

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<sup>7</sup>These included the space project, 39 more B-52's, 26 KC-135 jet tankers, 2 more Polaris submarines. New York Times, April 4, 1958, pp. 1 & 13.

<sup>8</sup>New York Times, June 26, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup>The \$1.2 billion included \$638 million for 6 missile submarines, \$69 million for Navy assault craft, \$108.9 million for 13 more B-52's, \$11.2 million for 30 new jet tankers, and \$140 million for troop transport planes. New York Times, July 31, 1958, p. 1.

<sup>10</sup>Senator Chavez quoted in New York Times, July 31, 1958, p. 1.

the President had requested.<sup>11</sup> According to a New York Times analysis, the new funds added by Congress were "a true reflection of the American people's concern whether our military establishment is really adequate to meet the demands of both our own defense and of our farflung commitments in the defense of freedom."<sup>12</sup> Generally, it was agreed that Congress had shown more wisdom than the Administration in trying to provide a budget which balanced the nation's ability to retaliate against total atomic war and its ability to cope with limited war to keep them from spreading into world wars. Thus when Secretary of Defense McElroy admitted that the Administration would freeze the \$815 million in extra defense funds voted by Congress, strong criticism was levelled at the Administration's concept of national strategy. Two major criticisms raised were that the Administration was taking too great a risk in the use of future push-button weapons at the expense of conventional weapons; and it was committing the United States to the doctrine of massive retaliation without assuring the ability of forces for limited war to carry out their missions.<sup>13</sup>

The Administration responded to these criticisms by declaring the United States had not lost its limited war capability, that even though manpower was being decreased, the Army and Marines would have greater effectiveness due to greater firepower, and, that although limited wars

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<sup>11</sup>New York Times, August 7, 1958, p. 3.

<sup>12</sup>New York Times, August 9, 1958, p. 12.

<sup>13</sup>New York Times, January 19, 1958, IV, p. 8.



were more desirable than large wars, it was the all-out war that was more likely if the two great powers clashed.<sup>14</sup>

It thus seemed evident that the Administration, in determining the defense budget for the fiscal year 1959, was more concerned with saving money than with creating an adequate defense force, one that could cope with any war situation, and although more money was being spent, the increased money was non sufficient to offset rising costs. The Administration showed that, although modified, massive retaliation was still the cornerstone of American defense policy; and in spite of the desires of Congress for a more flexible military policy, the Administration further committed itself to the view that by increasing the country's ability to fight a general war, the capability to fight limited wars would also be increased.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

The economy-mindedness of the Eisenhower Administration was carried over to the defense budget of 1960 in much the same manner that was evident in the budget of 1959. It was to be a budget that illustrated many of the features of the "New Look" policy of 1953 -- a policy designed to produce more powerful weapons in order to reduce military costs. Thus, in a press conference in November 1, 1958 President Eisenhower indicated that the armed services could have their costly missile systems, but at the expense of existing weapons systems. He warned that these new weapons would have to displace rather than supplement the existing systems in order to prevent the rise of a "garrison-state" in which the military, by using most of the economy, would be able to influence all political decisions. He told newsmen, "we have got to do some good, hard-work thinking on the thing, and not just pile one weapon and one system on another and so in the long run break ourselves."<sup>15</sup> Later that month Secretary McElroy voiced practically the same opinion when he stated, "what we've got to do now is to make a scientific judgment and appraisal of programs that have become marginal in the light of increased knowledge that has come from a year's experience with test programs."<sup>16</sup>

These statements indicated that the defense budget for Fiscal Year 1960 would mean more austerity for the military. Although it would probably carry an increase in expenditures, it was believed that it would be just sufficient to cover the increased costs caused by inflation and the growing complexity of weapons systems. Because of this, both manpower and missiles "would have to give."<sup>17</sup> Before the President's budget message

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<sup>15</sup>President Eisenhower, press conference, New York Times, November 5, 1958, p. 13.

<sup>16</sup>Secretary of Defense McElroy, press conference, New York Times, November 29, 1958, p. 1.



there were indications that he would seek \$40 billion in arms, a figure challenged by the Democratic Congress. Senator Lyndon Johnson seemed to voice the dominant opinion when he said that he was "deeply concerned and somewhat disappointed to observe that in the field of military preparations they (the Administration) are programming as if they were living in a static world rather than an exploding, expanding, and developing world."<sup>18</sup> Thus, it seemed that Congress would probably "chart its own course" in spending for missiles and limited war capabilities.

In his budget message of January 1959, President Eisenhower more or less confirmed the opinions of many Democratic Congressmen. He declared, "The objective of our defense effort today is the same as it has been in the past -- to deter wars, large or small. To achieve this objective we must have a well-rounded military force, under unified direction and control, properly equipped and trained, and ready to respond to any type of military operation that may be forced upon us. We have such a force now, and under this budget we will continue to have such a force."<sup>19</sup> To emphasize this new turn towards a more flexible military force, the budget brought forth a new classification for the armed services. Expenditures were broken down for a strategic force (SAC, Atlas Missiles, tactical Army, Marine, and Air Force units, mobile carrier task forces, and Polaris submarines), an air defense force, sea control forces, and tactical forces ("tactical elements of ground, naval, and air forces to deal with situations short of general war or to carry out tasks in the event of general war").<sup>20</sup> However, provisions for the

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<sup>18</sup> Senator Johnson, speech, New York Times, January 6, 1959, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup> President Eisenhower, budget message, New York Times, January 20, 1959, p. 17.

<sup>20</sup> New York Times, January 20, 1959, p. 17.



organization and use of these forces was not indicated, nor were the tactical forces well-defined, and although it seemed as if the Administration had finally realized the need for such functional grouping, there was no indication that it was anything more than a paper designation.

As was expected, the main emphasis of the budget was upon missiles and long-range nuclear weapons, and although it was another record budget (\$40,945,000,000) calling for an increase in the long-range missile systems, this was done at the expense of proposals to enhance the country's ability to fight limited wars. According to President Eisenhower, "this budget assures that essential defense needs are met."<sup>21</sup> This meant increased funds for the Atlas and Titan ICBM's, Jupiter and Thor IRBM's, Minuteman ICBM, and Polaris missiles, satellites, lunar probes, and anti-aircraft missiles -- "the more advanced and promising weapons systems."

Furthermore, because the armed services would have "significantly greater combat power as new weapons continue to be added to inventories,"<sup>22</sup> there would be no significant increase in manpower, but for the first time since the end of the Korean War there was no decrease in Army or Marine strength. Each service even obtained more funds, although the Army felt that its share was not enough to allow it to start its five year \$15 billion modernization program. And, although the Army remained at fourteen divisions, the Strategic Army Corps was reduced from four to three divisions, two of which were at full strength.

In summary, it was a budget which theoretically reduced numbers and increased power; it was characterized by an effort to produce the maximum from every defense dollar spent; it followed the 1959 budget in form;

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<sup>21</sup>President Eisenhower, budget message, New York Times, January 20, 1959, p. 17.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.



it was unacceptable to Congress and the armed services.

Although Secretary McElroy declared that the defense forces were adequate and the country was in a position "not to fight the general war, but to be in shape to win it, so the other fellow won't initiate it," and that "we are in that position now and will be in that position for the years under discussion" (through 1962),<sup>23</sup> there were serious doubts raised as to the adequacy of the budget. The first doubts came from the Joint Chiefs of Staff via written memoranda to Congress stating their reservations. The greatest criticism, as was expected, came from General Taylor of the Army. His reservations to the budget centered around funds for modernization, the Nike-Zeus missile, personnel strength, and the Army's surface-to-air missile program.<sup>24</sup> He was particularly annoyed at the lack of funds for tactical equipment and missiles, forces needed to fight limited wars. As a result he felt that the Army would be unable to carry out its assigned missions.<sup>25</sup> The memoranda from the Navy and the Air Force were similar in their demands for more funds. It must be noted, however, that all the other Chiefs endorsed the \$40.9 billion budget; their reservations were in regard to the funding for various parts of their respective service programs, and it was only the Army that was demanding an overall increase in funds. It also must be realized that

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<sup>23</sup> Secretary of Defense McElroy, New York Times, February 4, 1959, p. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Taylor, op. cit., p. 66. General Taylor stated that in the area of funds for the purchase of new equipment, which controls the rate of modernization, the Air Force received 60% of all available resources, the Navy and Marines 30% and the Army 10%.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

these memoranda might have been presented for political reasons -- to try to get more funds from Congress.

Further doubts were raised by various Senators, among them Jacob Javits (R., N.Y.), Allen Ellender (D., La.), and Estes Kefauver (D., Tenn.), who chided President Eisenhower for putting budget values ahead of defense values.<sup>26</sup> Later, the Senate took action against the Administration's desire to cut the strength of the Army and Marine Corps by attaching riders to the supplementary money bill demanding the Marines be maintained at 200,000 and the Army at 900,000 by threatening to tie up all Army and Navy funds unless the wishes of Congress were followed.<sup>27</sup> According to Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois, this was no time to "reduce our capacity to fight limited wars."<sup>28</sup>

The House responded to this by actually cutting the Administration's request for new money by one percent, although more money was given to the missile program and to the Army (an added \$155 million) for modernization.<sup>29</sup> Although this was substantially the same amount asked by the President, there was a different emphasis placed on its distribution. This was followed by the Senate Appropriations Committee request for a \$39.7 billion spending bill, placing a greater emphasis on both long-range missiles and forces for limited warfare. Included were more funds

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<sup>26</sup> New York Times, March 16, 1959, pp. 1 and 2. Hearings before the Senate Preparedness subcommittee.

<sup>27</sup> The riders were sponsored by Mike Mansfield and Russell Long. New York Times, May 1, 1959, p. 2.

<sup>28</sup> Senator Paul Douglas, New York Times, May 1, 1959, p. 2.

<sup>29</sup> New York Times, May 30, 1959, p. 1.



to keep the Marines at 200,000, and funds for a nuclear super carrier.<sup>30</sup> The bill was unanimously approved by the Senate and was \$775 million more than had been approved by the House. A compromise was reached by the House and Senate cutting the bill to \$39.2 billion, which was only \$19.2 million under the Presidential request, but with a greater emphasis on Army and Marine Corps. modernization and long-range missiles.<sup>31</sup> Thus Congress was able to override budget estimates in order to concentrate more funds upon strengthening ground forces to meet the challenges of limited, local wars, and to place a greater emphasis on missiles. This attitude also emphasized the growing battle between the Administration and a Democratic Congress over whether the defense spending desired by the Administration was for the right purposes.

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<sup>30</sup> The stated amounts were \$380 million for the supercarrier, \$43 million for the marines, and \$400 million more for Army modernization and the Nike-Zeus missile. New York Times, July 2, 1959, p. 9.

<sup>31</sup> New York Times, August 1, 1959, pp. 1 and 7. The Air Force received \$17 billion, the Army \$9.3 billion, the Navy \$11 billion and the Department of Defense, \$1.3 billion.

Thus a trend of austerity was established by the Administration with regard to the defense budget. Although each budget was larger than the one preceding it, it was evident that the increases were just able to cover the costs of present and past bills allowing little to be left over for the procurement of new arms and equipment. The causes of this were many. There was the heavy hand of the Bureau of the Budget and the Administration's desire for a "level budget." Expenditure limitations was placed on the services regardless of how much Congress decided to spend. An example of this were the funds withheld in the 1960 budget to keep the Marine Corps at 200,000. These ceilings prohibited the services from modernizing. There were also inflation and past under-estimation of costs by the Administration which helped keep the budget below the level sought by Congress and the armed services.<sup>32</sup>

According to James Reston of the New York Times, "the planners in the Pentagon were more interested in balancing Russian power than balancing the budget, but conservatives in the Administration are determined to keep it down."<sup>33</sup> The attitude of Secretary of the Treasury, Robert Anderson and Secretary of Defense Neil McElroy had been that a sound financial base is needed for military security, hence the desire to keep defense spending at a minimum. Furthermore, the Administration had been conducting a "peace program" and any arms build-up would tend to destroy the image it had been trying to present. The Administration was

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<sup>32</sup> New York Times, October 1, 1959, pp. 1 and 44.

<sup>33</sup> James Reston, New York Times, November 13, 1959, p. 10.



determined to be recognized as the party of peace and fiscal responsibility.<sup>34</sup> This, of course, was in direct contradiction to Pentagon planners (except the Air Force) who saw the need of carrying both a strategic and a tactical force regardless of the additional cost.

Thus, in November of 1959 the President set a \$41 billion ceiling on the defense budget. He warned that the United States should be on guard not to spend money hysterically on new weapons. According to him, the country was "trying to do many things that are not completely necessary." He said he would rather liquidate the national debt and develop a balanced budget.<sup>35</sup> It was evident that in the budget of 1961 there would be even less funds for limited war in spite of Administration-expressed realization of their need.

In his State of the Union message President Eisenhower painted an optimistic picture of the country's defense forces as being sufficient to deter any aggressor from waging all-out war, and he declared that "to meet situations of less than general nuclear war, we continue to maintain our carrier forces, our many service units abroad, our always ready Army Strategic Forces and Marine Corps divisions, and the civilian components. The continuing modernization of these forces is a costly but necessary process, and is scheduled to go forward at a rate which will steadily add to our strength."<sup>36</sup>

These two themes that military and economic strength are inseparable and that the United States has sufficient general and limited war troops

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> President Eisenhower, press conference, New York Times, December 3, 1959, p. 18.

<sup>36</sup> President Eisenhower, State of the Union Message, New York Times, January 8, 1960, p. 10.



and equipment were plainly evident in the President's budget message of January 18, 1960. The President proposed a \$40,995,000,000 budget which provided for more battlefield rockets as well as ICBM's, yet was only \$50 million more than the previous year's budget. As in the past, President Eisenhower reiterated the need for forces able to meet all contingencies. He said that:

...strategy and tactics of the United States military forces are now undergoing one of the greatest transitions in history. The change of emphasis from conventional-type to missile-type warfare must be made with care, mindful that the one type of warfare cannot be safely neglected for the other. Our military force must be capable of contending successfully with any contingency that may be forced upon us, from limited emergencies to all-out war.<sup>37</sup>

To accomplish this object personnel strength was to remain the same with 2,482,000 in the active service. Also, the functional designations established in the budget message the previous year were again used. Of special interest was the makeup of the "tactical forces." The President called for more funds for modernization and improvement in the effectiveness of these forces by improving the firepower and mobility of the fourteen Army and three Marine divisions with more NATO ammunition-fired rifles and machine guns, M-60 tanks, M-113 armored personnel carriers, self-propelled howitzers and a new family of other self-propelled non-nuclear artillery, more battlefield missiles for close range fire support, a thirty-five percent increase in Army aircraft, more tactical aircraft for the Air Force, and more Marine Aircraft.<sup>38</sup> Thus for the first time a Presidential budget message showed a disposition to build

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<sup>37</sup> President Eisenhower, budget message, New York Times, January 19, 1960, p. 18.

<sup>38</sup> President's budget message, New York Times, January 19, 1960, p. 18.



up the country's limited war forces. This was further shown by the first cut (\$318 million) ever suffered by the Air Force, followed by increases for the Navy (\$112 million) the Army (\$84 million).<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, the cutbacks made in the budget were suffered in the general war capability area -- the B-70, supercarrier, and the Nike-Zeus missile.

Even though the budget seemed to take notice of the country's need for limited war forces, as well as general war forces, there was strong criticism directed toward it because the increases made were felt to be too modest. Although the percentages that go to the services shifted slightly for the first time since the "New Look" in 1954,<sup>40</sup> there was no major shift in allocations, and the increases made were felt to be adequate again to cover only past and present bills. Also, criticism was directed toward the Bureau of the Budget for keeping the spending ceilings below a feasible level. This was denied, however, the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare Arthur Flemming, who stated, "I am convinced that Dwight Eisenhower will never permit any considerations -- including fiscal considerations -- to stand in the way of our continuing to deal with the forces of international Communism from a position of strength rather than weakness."<sup>41</sup> The armed services also expressed their dissatisfaction with the budget, although these

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<sup>39</sup>The Air Force still received the largest share, \$18.6 billion; the Navy 11.6 billion; the Army, 9.3 billion, and the Dept. of Defense, 1.3 billion. New York Times, January 19, 1960, p. 2.

<sup>40</sup>The Army's share of the budget amounted to 23.5% (23% in 1959), the Navy 30% (25% in 1959) and the Air Force 44% (46% in 1959). Hanson Baldwin, New York Times, January 21, 1960, p. 9.

<sup>41</sup>Arthur Flemming, New York Times, February 13, 1960, p. 4.



criticisms may have come from the pressure of competition for funds rather than any genuine criticism of the strategic policy.

In keeping with its actions of the past two years, Congress again proceeded to alter the budget without significantly changing the sums. The House Appropriations Committee bill provided for more SAC bombers in the air, more transport planes, and more nuclear submarines. This might have been very significant had not the Administration suddenly added an extra \$1.5 billion to the budget to give more attention to increasing the airlift, Army modernization, maintenance to the National Guard and Reserves, more F-106 interceptors, and more funds for the Minuteman ICBM program.<sup>42</sup> The final House bill came to only \$121 million more than the President had requested and included more funds for planes, submarines, satellites, Army modernization. Later the Senate passed a \$40.3 billion defense appropriations bill, a full billion dollars more than the House had requested. The failure at the Summit conference and the new tough line taken by Mr. Khrushchev seemed to have accounted for such an increase. According to Senator Dennis Chavez (D., N.M.) who presented the bill to the Senate, "There can be no price tag on defense."<sup>43</sup> These funds included \$90 million more for Army modernization and \$40 million to increase the Marines to 200,000 men. This overall increase was subsequently cut to \$650 million by a Senate-House committee which deleted the funds for the Marines and raised Army modernization funds to \$200 million more than the original Administration request.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> New York Times, April 30, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>43</sup> Senator Dennis Chavez, Senate speech, New York Times, June 17, 1960, p. 1.

<sup>44</sup> New York Times, June 26, 1960, pp. 1 and 28.



The study of these three budgets has pointed out many weaknesses and problems faced by the nation's leaders in planning for a defense force able to meet all contingencies, from local wars to all-out war. The doctrine of massive retaliation has to be a primary component of the country's strategic concept, but, as has been pointed out, it does not provide the total answer for the country's defense needs. Yet the country's planners are faced with the problem of providing funds which will enable the nation to meet other limited war contingencies without weakening its ability to deter or fight general war. The above discussion has shown Congress to be willing to legislate funds to meet these contingencies, while the Administration desires to maintain itself as the "party of peace" and to present a "level budget" and thus has refused to use the extra funds. The major area that has suffered from this dilemma is the area of weapons procurement. Many of the weapons of the Army, Navy, and Air Force used for conventional and limited warfare are rapidly becoming obsolete without sufficient funds being available to replace them...Such procurement has to increase at a rate equal to personnel reductions called for by the Administration, or else the Administration's claim that troop reductions are being met by increases in mobility and firepower will be a mere hollow claim.

Not only has the Army failed to receive sufficient funds for modernization and procurement of new weapons, but its mobility has been severely hampered by the Administration's refusal to allocate more funds for the Military Air Transport Service and the Navy's amphibious fleet.

The Administration has countered these criticisms by citing the successes of the Lebanon and other operations which show that the nation has a very considerable capability to "react with strength" to limited threats on a very small scale. This may be true at present, but it is something to consider for the future when the increasing obsolescence of the Army and Marine's equipment reaches a critical level.

The other problem brought out by this study has been the partisan nature of the debate itself. The Administration, striving for a balanced budget and a strong, stable currency and balance of payments, has been determined to keep the budget within definite limits, while Congress, more intent on actual defense values, has tried to raise it to take care of all contingencies. Thus, while the Administration has admitted the need for forces capable of meeting limited war threats effectively but has refused to do anything about it, Congress has tried to see that this capability is realized. One thing is certain, however. The deterrent policy of the Administration has been sufficient to prevent any "hot wars" involving the United States from occurring up to the present time, and without specific figures on the numbers of atomic warheads available, it is difficult for the average American to say whether or not the funds called for by the Administration are in reality insufficient. Many of the arguments offered by the critics are partisan and often hysterical, and thus tend to cloud the issues. However, if the views of the military leaders themselves can be taken at face value, they indicate that the services are deficient in the area of modernization, and this will pose a grave problem for defense planners in the future.



## Chapter VI

## Conclusion

The main focus of this study has been the reaction of the Armed Services, Congress, and the Administration toward the need to build up forces to deal with situations short of all-out war, or limited, war. This does not imply the recognition of a doctrine of limited war; in fact, there is a great difference between a doctrine of limited war and a capability to deter or fight limited wars. Henry Kissinger (Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy) and Robert Osgood (Limited War) while calling for the adoption of a strategy flexible enough to meet all contingencies, have also demanded the inclusion of a definite doctrine of limited war in American military strategy. This doctrine actually calls for the use of war as an instrument of national policy. According to Kissinger, "it is a historical accident reflecting the nature of our foreign involvements that we should have come to consider limited war as an aberration from the 'pure' case and that we have paid little attention to its strategic opportunities."<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Osgood has stated that "in the use of armed force as an instrument of national policy no greater force should be employed than is necessary to achieve the objectives toward which it is directed."<sup>2</sup> In this way the so-called doctrine of limited war becomes an offensive strategy to gain specific limited objectives. This strategy is entirely contrary to traditional American thinking, as defense policy has always been of the defensive nature, and although the

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<sup>1</sup>Kissinger, op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>2</sup>Osgood, op. cit., p. 18.

President has the power to declare war, it would undoubtedly be politically (and possibly constitutionally) impossible to declare war, if there were no specific case of aggression involved. It is this characteristic of the doctrine put forth by Kissinger and Osgood that is somewhat objectionable and unrealistic as a definite policy to be followed by the United States. As the leader of the free world and a champion of the principles of the United Nations, the United States would be a hypocrite if it used war, limited or otherwise, to accomplish its aims. One of the principles behind the United Nations is a desire to settle all disputes peacefully without resorting to violence. The use of armed force to gain one's ends except as a last resort or as an emergency measure would be contradictory the principle and would thus cause the United States to lose stature among its allies and its potential allies in the uncommitted bloc of nations.

On the other hand, the maintenance of an effective capability to deter or fight limited wars implies a defensive strategy which is capable to meeting limited forms of aggression, but not initiating aggression, as is implied in the doctrine of Kissinger and Osgood. This type of strategy is both politically sound and feasible, for it complements the strategy of massive retaliation and gives the United States an ability to meet all situations requiring the use of force. It is this factor that has been the focus of this study.

One of the difficulties that has developed from this study has been the fact that it is hard to define just what constitutes limited war, for in order to build up a capability, the definition of what it is the



capability will deal with, must be determined. Ideally, a limited war has been viewed as a war confined as to area, targets, weapons, manpower, time, and tempo, but is unlikely that so many limitations could be imposed or maintained simultaneously. What is likely is that it would be limited mainly as to area and weapons. Still, a war limited as to area and weapons could take on a multitude of forms varying from guerilla actions to the clash of modern arms. It might result from Communist support of indigenous revolutions, intervention of Communist "volunteers" in a war between two small states, direct invasion across a well-defined boundary, or wars occurring among small states that do not involve direct Communist participation.<sup>3</sup> To be able to react to these varied types of wars is the goal of a policy which affords a flexible capability.

Thus limited war itself has come to take on a new meaning. The limited war of the 18th and 19th centuries is entirely different from the limited war of the future. The wars of the 18th and 19th centuries were waged by all forces and were limited as to technology, forces available, balance of power, and moral restraints. In contrast, the limited wars that may occur in the future may not be limited by technology, moral restraints, and manpower; nor will they be used as instruments of national policy by all nations.

This uncertainty about the form limited wars may take has led to the problem of defining what constitutes a capability to deal with these wars. The critics of the Administration's defense policies have maintained that a flexible force is needed to meet these limited situations and still maintain an ability to deter general war. A wide range of capabilities,

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<sup>3</sup> Osgood, op. cit., p. 237.



it has been argued, would enable the United States to deter or fight any type of war, and thus free other resources for economic and social aid to build up depressed nations. In the words of Secretary of the Army Wilber Brucker, "developing appropriate military strength to cope with the whole spectrum of this peril (the use of lesser forms of aggression by the Communists) is not a simple matter of choosing between the H-bomb and the rifle. Rather, it is a matter of maintaining balanced forces capable of responding properly to all situations -- those that require the H-bomb or the rifle, or any other situation in between."<sup>4</sup> The Administration has long maintained this to be its policy; the difficulties have lain in its implementation.

The adoption of a flexible policy is difficult because its concept is vague and therefore has led to the emergence of many different concepts, all purporting to accomplish the same ends. The Army has long maintained that it offers the best means to deter or fight limited wars and therefore it should get prime attention. Yet when the Bureau of the Budget initiated a proposal to deprive the Army of its general war mission and bring back at least two divisions from overseas on the grounds that since the Army felt itself to be the ideal force for dealing with limited wars, it should restrict itself to that by reducing its continental air defense program and overseas deployment for general war, the Army was outraged and complained this would change the Army's mission as set by law.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the Army has felt that it needs more divisions, fully armed and trained, more speed and mobility, and more funds to replace obsolete weapons and equipment. Indicative of the results achieved by the Army was

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<sup>4</sup>Secretary of the Army Wilber Brucker, speech, quoted in New York Times, November 15, 1959, p. 18.

<sup>5</sup>New York Times, November 15, 1959, p. 1.



General Taylor's retirement as Chief of Staff in the middle of 1959. In answer to the question of why he retired, he stated: "For four years I have struggled to modernize the Army and my success was limited. So I decided I would do one thing for the country and withdraw an obsolescent general from the inventory."<sup>6</sup>

The Navy has also developed a concept to fight limited and general war, and has even sided with the Army. The Navy views itself as the ideal force for dealing with limited wars through its ability to transport and support the Marine Corps in limited war situations. This capability, it is felt, was proved in the Lebanon crisis. Also, its Polaris submarines and super carriers could be used for both limited and general wars.

The Air Force has taken the opposite view, that the prime deterrent for any type of war is a nuclear retaliatory force capable of destroying any possible enemy with a minimum of destruction to the United States.

Thus, the current military thinking may be divided into two views: The Strategic/tactical view and the tactical/strategic view. The latter is taken mainly by the Army and the Navy and most of Congress, while the former view is held by the Air Force and many Administration officials, although there are different points of view within the services themselves. The tactical/strategic adherents view future war as economic and political penetration, possibly, followed by the use of force by the enemy to secure limited objectives. For this reason they feel that forces trained and equipped to meet this threat are needed. The holders of the opposite opinion view any future war as all-out with an air strike at the sources of strength of the West. Thus the United States will have to be prepared

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<sup>6</sup> General Maxwell Taylor, press conference, New York Times, June 26, 1959, p. 8.



to launch an anticipatory attack of its own or be prepared to retaliate against the first blow. The tactical/strategic adherents call for the use of tactical nuclear weapons; their opposites view only those weapons of the highest yield as the most feasible. The tactical/strategic adherents seek a sizeable troop life, the strategic-tactical group minimize it. The tactical/strategic group asks for aircraft carriers; their adversaries, submarines. Lastly, the tactical/strategic group sees the need for a large defense budget to initiate a flexible policy, while the strategic/tactical adherents desire to limit the budget by determining the best weapons system and then putting all funds into its development.<sup>7</sup> These conflicting concepts have come about because of the increasing limits being placed on the funds available to the services. As noted in Chapter IV, the defense budget since 1958 has increased only enough to cover past and present bills and the results of inflation; it has not been sufficient to allow the services to develop all the programs which they desire. This has caused a competition for funds which has caused conflicting concepts to arise. As a result, it has been felt that the lower priority projects, those for limited war, have been neglected.

Congress has generally taken the liberal viewpoint just discussed, while the Administration has remained in the middle of the road. Congress has continually appropriated more money to build up limited war forces, and the Administration has chosen to withhold them from use. President Eisenhower has maintained that by "concentrating our efforts on the more advanced and more promising weapons systems, we can increase substantially the combat capabilities of our military forces with a relatively small

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<sup>7</sup> Gavin, op. cit., pp. 250-251.



increase in the overall cost of defense."<sup>8</sup> This implies a policy not tied to one weapons system, but one which does restrict military spending -- one of the requisites of the liberals' proposals. The Administration has voiced approval of a flexible policy, but has chosen its own means to implement it. It has long maintained that the United States has enough forces for limited wars, and that the best way to deal with small wars is to create allied forces, "principally ground forces, numbered in the millions, with a great capability."<sup>9</sup> Thus, it is unnecessary to use American forces to fight these limited wars. This accounts for the military aid to NATO, SEATO, CENTO, and OAS states. However, it does not solve the problem of the uncommitted nations, some of whom have asked for military aid and have not received it, as was the case in Guinea.

The difficulty to determining what constitutes an adequate limited war capability has been increased by the appearance of nuclear weapons -- especially missiles. The Administration has placed a high priority on nuclear missiles and the defense budgets showed them to have precedence over other weapons systems. However, as of the budget for 1961, the Administration provided missiles to be used on the battlefield, thus subscribing to the theory that limited ground wars can be fought with nuclear weapons of low yield. Even so, the Army has been fighting what it calls a stampede to produce ICBM's and other weapons designed for nuclear war and has called for a step-up in the production of conventional weapons to counter the Soviet increase in conventional power -- new tanks, self-

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<sup>8</sup> President Eisenhower, budget message, New York Times, January 20, 1959, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald Quarles, quoted in New York Times, July 7, 1958, p. 13.



propelled guns, tracked rocket guns, mortars, assault amphibians, new small arms, etc.<sup>10</sup> This attitude was backed up by a Department of Defense report in June of 1958 which stated that, "Soviet military authorities have categorically rejected the concept of a conflict in which low yield atomic weapons could be employed without either combatant resorting to the most powerful weapons in his arsenal."<sup>11</sup> Then there was the statement of Vice Admiral Charles Brown, in which he declared, "I would not recommend the use of atomic weapons no matter how small, when both sides have the power to destroy the world."<sup>12</sup> Thus, it has been argued that a build up of conventional weapons is the best way to deal with limited wars; while others, including the Administration, maintain that low yield battlefield nuclear weapons are necessary to counter the larger number of Communist forces. Both sides agree that it is necessary to have a limited war capability, yet neither can agree as to what constitutes an effective capability.

It is the doctrine of massive retaliation that has received the most criticism in this debate. Henry Kissinger has noted that "if the Soviet bloc can present its challenge in less than all-out war, it may gain a crucial advantage. Every move on its part will then pose the appalling dilemma of whether we are willing to commit suicide to prevent encroachment, none of which seems to threaten our existence directly, but which may be a step on the road to our ultimate destruction."<sup>13</sup> This same opinion was also voiced by Governor Robert Meyner of New Jersey who stated: "Whenever

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<sup>10</sup> New York Times, December 2, 1957, pp. 1 and 20.

<sup>11</sup> New York Times, June 8, 1958, p. 19.

<sup>12</sup> Vice Adm. Charles Brown, speech, quoted in New York Times, October 8, 1958, p. 12.

<sup>13</sup> Kissinger, op. cit., p. 11.



the Soviet union or one of its satellite states is willing to undertake the risks of military aggression, direct or indirect, we cannot any longer afford to be in the position of having no choice except to run for cover or risk blowing up the entire world."<sup>14</sup> These critics have implied that the doctrine of massive retaliation offers only two alternatives in the case of Soviet aggression. This seems to be an unjustifiable criticism, as the Lebanon crisis and the Quemoy incident did not result in either the United States running for cover or starting a nuclear war. Furthermore, an armed force (excluding reserves) of 2.4 million men indicates that there are troops available to fight limited wars. What these critics have failed to see is that while higher priority has been given the nuclear retaliatory force, other forces have remained in being to cope with other possible situations. This is not to say, however, that the doctrine of massive retaliation does not deserve criticism. By placing so high a priority on the nuclear retaliatory force, the Administration, although maintaining a large force, has not been able (or has not felt it necessary) to provide sufficient funds to replace obsolete weapons and equipment used by the armed forces. Only if this is done, can the Administration truly admit that its strategy is one of complete flexibility. In order to accomplish this task, either of two alternatives must be followed. Either the funds for the nuclear deterrent be cut down and the funds thus freed used to build up the capability to deter or fight limited wars, or the budget be increased to accommodate the modernization program. Either alternative will meet criticism, but the

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<sup>14</sup> Gov. Robert Meyner, speech quoted in New York Times, April 24, 1959, p. 14.



modernization program has to be accomplished if the tactical forces are to be a realistic element in the future.

Thus, the main theme behind this study is not that the United States must adopt a policy which favors the use of limited war as an instrument of national policy, but that the administration must realistically view its own strategic doctrine in a proper perspective. For, although it has maintained that our strategic doctrine is flexible, it has in fact failed to implement this policy to provide for adequate capabilities to meet all types of possible military aggression. Actually, the administration has a choice between two contrasting military postures, each of which is expensive. "The one, concentrating upon strategic air power as the deterrent, would economize on tactical arms; the other, stressing a dual-capability deterrent, would economize on air defense for our civilians."<sup>15</sup> By cutting down on the huge costs of protecting American cities and using these funds to protect SAC bases adequately and develop tactical forces, an adequate deterrent would result. Furthermore, the Administration will have to take measures to prevent wars from spreading outside the NATO area, and to be prepared to fight smaller wars in the Middle East and the Soviet-Sino periphery (Iran to Korea). This would entail added ground forces, new and diversified low-yield nuclear weapons, new ground and airborne equipment for mobile, tactical operations, an adequate system of conventional weapons, the maintenance of strategic retaliation capabilities, and forces for total war. This would comprise a truly flexible military policy, one which provided for a capability for fighting both all-out wars and limited wars.

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<sup>15</sup> Malcolm Hoag, "Cost of a dual capability," Ordnance, vol. XLII, March-April, 1958, p. 824.



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